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ABSTRACT

The proceedings of a symposium on Hispanic educational issues, held in Texas in 1985, are collected in this pamphlet. A short preface, a list of participants, and transcriptions of brief welcoming remarks made by a number of officials are provided. Then, three conference papers are presented: (1) "For Whom the School Bell Tolls," by Lauro F. Cavazos, discusses general problems that affect Hispanic students, focusing particularly on the disproportionately high rate of Hispanic dropouts; (2) "Hispanics Creating Excellence," by Norma Cantu, reviews recent legislation and legal cases affecting Hispanic education, actions taken by the Mexican American Legal Defense and Educational Fund, and ways in which the political, business, and educational communities might cooperate to better educate Hispanics; and (3) "Economic Challenges of Poor School Districts," by Raul Besteiro, Jr., describes generally the efforts of the Brownsville, Texas, school district to educate a continually growing population of recent Mexican immigrants, despite a very tight budget. Also included is a transcript of a general discussion among symposium participants, a summary of reports on local educational problems in 19 Texas school districts, and concluding remarks by Cavazos. (KH)

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THE QUEST FOR EXCELLENCE IN THE EDUCATION OF HISPANICS

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Proceedings of the Texas Symposium on Hispanic Educational Issues

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THE QUEST FOR EXCELLENCE IN THE EDUCATION OF HISPANICS

Proceedings of the Texas Symposium
on Hispanic Educational Issues

April 22, 1985
Texas Tech University

General Chair and Moderator: Richard E. Ishler
Symposium Chairs: Clyde E. Kelsey, Jr. and Hermán S. García

Edited by Alice Denham

This symposium was sponsored by Texas Tech University's College of Education, which gratefully acknowledges the support provided by the Meadows Foundation, Mr. Mike Higgins, the Texas Tech University Foundation, and other private individuals and groups. Copies of *The Quest for Excellence*, the proceedings of the symposium, are available from the College of Education, Texas Tech University, Lubbock, Texas 79409.

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PREFACE

Almost 45 percent of all Hispanic students in the United States fail to earn a high school diploma. Most of these, in fact, drop out of school by the tenth grade. This great loss in human capital will have a critical impact on the future of American democracy; Thomas Jefferson was not alone in believing that a nation that thinks it can be both ignorant and free wants what never was or ever will be.

We at Texas Tech University believe that the success rate for Hispanics in education can be improved to the degree that people care to make the necessary changes in attitudes, strategies, and priorities.

To implement such changes, the Texas Tech College of Education arranged this Texas Symposium on Hispanic Educational Issues. Participants from communities, school districts, and institutions of higher education across the state heard diverse voices review the issues and possible solutions. Then participants, meeting in community teams, discussed issues as they pertain to different Texas localities, proposed strategies for solving problems, and began to develop a plan of action. The final part of the symposium at Texas Tech was devoted to an exchange of ideas among participants.

In the fall following the symposium, participants were asked to provide follow-up information by means of a questionnaire. A summary report was made available thereafter to all participating teams and throughout the state of Texas. The result should be acceleration of progress in the Quest for Excellence in the Education of Hispanics in Texas.

The encouragement of Lauro F. Cavazos, President of Texas Tech University and Texas Tech University Health Sciences Center made it possible to bring the symposium to fruition; his concern about the problems related to the education of Hispanics in the United States provided the original stimulus for planning the symposium.

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WELCOMES AND GREETINGS

WELCOME TO AND OVERVIEW OF THE SYMPOSIUM

Richard E. Ishler

Good morning ladies and gentlemen. I am Richard Ishler, Dean of the College of Education here at Texas Tech University, and it is my pleasure to welcome all of you to the first statewide symposium on Hispanic Educational Issues. If this symposium accomplishes our goals and objectives, Texas Tech is committed to holding these symposia on a regular basis, and we believe that we will, in fact, meet our goals and objectives.

About a year ago, our president, Dr. Lauro Cavazos, indicated an interest in holding a meeting on the Texas Tech campus to discuss the matter of the high dropout rate of Hispanic high school students. He talked to some of us in the College of Education about his concerns and asked us to design a conference or symposium to discuss and deal with this important issue. As a result, the symposium that you are attending today evolved.

Now please note that although the problems that we will be addressing today result from the 45 percent dropout rate of Hispanic high school youth, they are not just education or school problems. They are instead community problems that cut across all segments of our society; that is why we have asked communities to send teams to address these issues. The teams are composed of school personnel, school board members, business leaders, lawyers, doctors, politicians, and other community leaders. We are pleased to have about 30 communities represented here today, with teams ready to work together to address these problems.

I was recently in Austin attending a meeting, and I picked up a form that the Texas Education Agency has just put together that shows the Hispanic population today, this school year, in different regions of our state. Statewide, 29.3 percent of all of the students attending our schools this year are Hispanic, and as you probably know, it is predicted that by the year 1990, the proportion will increase to nearly 50 percent. So we need to deal with these problems today, and we are very pleased that all of you are here to help us address these issues. The individuals on our platform will be introduced as they

come up on the program, so we won't take time at this point to introduce each one of them.

First of all, I would like to give you a quick overview of the day's activities. There will be a series of welcomes and greetings from the individuals on my right; then we will have the three main speakers. Following the main speeches will be an opportunity for the speakers to interact with one another and with you in a question-and-answer period. We then will have lunch, followed by the work sessions this afternoon. We won't spend time now to give you explicit instructions on how the afternoon session will work; that will be done at 1:15. Then at 4:00, we ask that all of you return to this room, where we will have a wrap-up session and some sharing of the ideas that the different teams have come up with to address the issues.

Now, I would like to introduce two of my colleagues in the College of Education who are cochairpersons of the symposium and will be here all day to help you, to facilitate in any way that they can. They are Dr. Clyde Kelsey and Dr. Hermán García. These two gentlemen worked very closely with me in preparing and planning this symposium and will serve as facilitators today.

Now to the program. We have invited four individuals to bring greetings or welcomes to you. The first of these will bring greetings and welcome on behalf of Texas Tech University. I am happy to present our Vice President for Academic Affairs and Research, Dr. John R. Darling.

WELCOME TO TEXAS TECH UNIVERSITY

John R. Darling

Thank you very much, Dean Ishler. It's a real privilege on behalf of Texas Tech University for me to have this opportunity to welcome each and every one of you to this symposium on educational excellence. Texas Tech University, a community composed of more than 23,000 students and approximately 1150 faculty members, is certainly committed to the quest for excellence in educational experience and considers it an honor to have the opportunity to host this particular event.

They say that the stinger on a bee is approximately one-eighth of an inch long; the rest that you feel is enthusiasm and conviction. If in these brief welcoming remarks I reflect a degree of conviction, it

is because I believe that you and I, working together, addressing the issues that we will be talking about today, can make a difference in the lives of the Hispanic students we serve.

It has been said that there are three basic types of people: those who make things happen, those who watch things happen, and those who wonder what has happened. Unfortunately, our society today is made up primarily of individuals who fall in the latter two categories. But it doesn't have to be that way. On that assumption and belief, we have gathered here a group of people who want to make things happen for themselves, for their communities, for their school systems, and for the individuals that we serve. This symposium can truly be an exciting turning point in the lives of a number of people.

I recently heard the story of a cowboy who was riding along the trails of West Texas. As he rounded the bend, he came across an Indian who was lying with his ear to the ground. The Indian said, "Wagon. Wagon drawn by two horses. Horses both dapple gray. Two people in wagon: one man, one woman. Woman wearing blue calico dress. Man driving wagon." The cowboy said, "That is amazing! You mean you can tell all of that just by listening with your ear to the ground?" The Indian said, "No, they ran over me 30 minutes ago."

In so many ways, too many people are concerned about being run over or are so preoccupied with the perception of having been run over or disadvantaged that I believe they lose the opportunities available to them in life. We are living in a time in which it is so easy to see the glass as being half empty, a time in which it is so much easier to criticize or to complain than to become involved in helping to make conditions better for ourselves and for others; and certainly, if there was ever a need to make a difference in educational leadership, it is now. There exists today such a need for leadership and such a need to deal with the problems with which you and I individually and collectively are involved.

There is a great story from ancient Greek history that perhaps illustrates this point. Many of us are probably not as aware of Greek history as we would like to be, but I suspect that we are all familiar with the three great names in Greek philosophy: Socrates, Plato, and Aristotle. One of Socrates' best known students was a young man by the name of Plato, and the only reason that we know anything about Socrates is because Plato wrote them down, and they became known as the "Dialogues of Socrates." Plato in turn had a series of students, and perhaps the best known student of Plato was a young man by the name of Aristotle. Plato was the direct teacher of Aristotle; yet the story does not end there, because Aristotle in turn had a young

student, a student whose name and whose fame would live forever in the annals of history. One day, Aristotle was approached by a king, a man by the name of Philip of Macedonia. Like other concerned parents of our day, Philip was not very happy with the school system and wanted a private tutor for his young son. The boy was 11 years old at the time. His name was Alexander, and in time, history would call him Alexander the Great.

For one year, Aristotle was employed by Philip to teach Alexander. He taught him a lot of things about mathematics, about politics, about philosophy, about how to lead an organization. One day, as the story goes, right in the middle of a mathematics lesson, Alexander asked his teacher, "How many is one?" I suspect that there are many ways in which Aristotle might have answered that question. He could have said, "Well, one is a unity, one is a prime number, it's half of two, it's made up of two halves." Aristotle might have been tempted to give any one of these direct answers to his student, Alexander. But realizing the importance of the teaching mode in which he found himself, Aristotle said, "Wait until tomorrow, and I will give you the answer then."

As the story goes, the next day he came back and taught to young Alexander, this future king, this future extender of Greek civilization throughout the known world, an important leadership lesson: that in human affairs, in organizational leadership, one can be a very great many.

As each of you approaches your responsibilities in the quest for educational excellence for Hispanics, and as you consider your particular contributions wherever you find yourself, let me ask you the same question. How many is *one*, and how many are *you*? The times call out for uncommon leadership in our quest for excellence in education. Virtually every newspaper that we read reminds us of this need. It can be a great opportunity and each of us can make a significant contribution *if*—and unfortunately there is always that if—we will make decisions, *if* we will have the courage, and *if* we will have the character to be creative and innovative in our educational leadership responsibilities.

Lysippus was a famous sculptor. From a huge block of stone, he had carved a singular statue. A passerby asked him what the statue represented and Lysippus replied, "It is the statue Opportunity."

"But why," asked the passerby, "do you have the statue standing on its toes?"

"Because opportunity stays but a moment," Lysippus answered.

"Then why do you have wings on its ankles?"

"Because opportunity flies quickly," was the reply.

"Why do you have a lock of hair on its forehead?"

Lysippus paused for a moment and replied, "When opportunity approaches, you can seize it easily."

"Why then do you have a bald place on the back of its head?"

"When opportunity passes by, you cannot seize it," Lysippus replied.

Robert Kennedy made it popular, but George Bernard Shaw said long ago, "Some see things as they are and ask why. I prefer to see things as they might be and ask why not." I hope that each of us can seize upon the opportunities afforded by this symposium to make a difference in the lives of the Hispanic students we are called upon to serve. We here at Texas Tech University are firmly committed to that particular objective. We welcome each of you and wish for you the very best in your quest for excellence in facilitating the educational experience.

MODERATOR'S REMARKS

Thank you very much Dr. Darling for those inspiring remarks. And now to welcome all of you on behalf of the city of Lubbock, His Honor the Mayor, Mayor Alan Henry.

WELCOME TO LUBBOCK

Alan Henry

On behalf of the folks here in the city of Lubbock, I would like to welcome each of you. I met quite a few of you last night, and we want you to know how proud we are of Dr. Cavazos and the leadership he is taking in this endeavor, because we feel that here in the city of Lubbock, we have a part in what Texas Tech does, and Tech Tech has a part in the city of Lubbock. I know of no city and university that have a better working partnership than ours do. We are very, very glad of that. I think, speaking as an elected official in the state of Texas (and I know that Maggie Trejo, who is doing such a marvelous job on our city council, will agree), that there is no subject more important to our cities than this particular subject, because we have a great asset in the Hispanic community of the state, and I say

truly that it is an asset that is just barely tapped. It is an asset that we need to work to involve in our communities, because truly, the term "Significant Minority" applies to each person involved in our cities who is Hispanic.

Sometimes I wonder a little about this term "Significant Minority," Dr. Cavazos, because I understand that here in America, every minority and every majority is significant. I think that that is why you are here today—to see how we can make *everyone* significant, and I commend you. I hope very much that this will be the start of something we can see annually, and something that will spread across the country. I welcome you and congratulate Texas Tech for this very auspicious beginning.

MODERATOR'S REMARKS

Thank you very much, Mayor Henry. Now to bring greetings from the Coordinating Board of the Texas College and University System, we have Teresa Palomo Acosta, who is the Director of Student Retention Services for the Coordinating Board.

GREETINGS FROM THE COORDINATING BOARD

Teresa Palomo Acosta

I am very happy to bring you ***bienvenidos*** and welcome to the symposium on behalf of Commissioner Kenneth H. Ashworth, the Commissioner of Higher Education for the state of Texas. The remarks that I am going to make to you have to do mostly with the role and the concern we as educators in postsecondary education are concerned with: the high attrition rate of Hispanic and Mexican-American students in the state.

As everyone prior to me has said, you are here together to deal with what is really a most important issue facing the future of the Hispanic community in the state, and that is the education of the children. Our concern today is also the society that those children will be capable of creating, and that they will then bequeath to other generations. I think that that is very, very important, and I hope that you leave this meeting today with some realistic strategies that will work in your community.

I want to emphasize: *realistic strategies*. In the first year that we have been working at the Coordinating Board, we have really focused on organizing goals and objectives through some advisory committees. We have also focused on the specific ways that those goals and objectives can work for each community. I think that is very, very crucial. The communities I go to see—whether they are public schools that I visit or individuals, families, and the like—want very much to be part of the decision making. One thing I have learned is that it is vital for all of us to know that we have a shared responsibility in this, and I am very glad. This is a goal that we wanted to see accomplished in some fashion.

I hoped that a gathering like this would occur sometime—and it is occurring much sooner. I know that from Commissioner Ashworth. I would very much like to commend President Cavazos for putting together this kind of gathering; it is very, very crucial for our work in higher education.

We in higher education need to work very, very closely with public school educators in elementary and secondary education, so I am delighted that Commissioner Kirby is with us today, because I think that we need to begin that dialogue on very day to day, realistic kinds of ways in which we can work together. The shared responsibilities that we all have, I think, mean that we can't just speak to other educators. We have to be concerned with parents, with the heavy roles they have, with the kinds of concerns they have. We know that in the Mexican American community, the one major goal of the education of children has always existed. So the strategies you can work out have to focus on that.

It is something that affects the society in general, and so I think that it is a shared responsibility. If we have that, I think we can, to quote the National Commission on Secondary Schooling for Hispanics, "Make something happen," but, not only make something happen but make something *very good* happen for Hispanic students.

The Coordinating Board would very much like to be part of this joint effort at the postsecondary education level, working with those of you who bring the students through the pipeline. I am very glad that we are here together and that we can create some joint efforts, both through the commissioner's role and through our role as the staff for the Coordinating Board. I hope that I can offer some insights to you on what we are discovering in higher education during our workshops this afternoon and that I can also learn from you the things that are difficult to work through in your communities and that you will need to face as you go back.

MODERATOR'S REMARKS

Now to bring greetings from the Texas Education Agency, the newly named Commissioner of Education. I want you to take your programs and scratch out where it says *interim*. The newly named Commissioner is Dr. William Kirby. Congratulations to you.

GREETINGS FROM THE TEXAS EDUCATION AGENCY

William N. Kirby

I am delighted to be with you today. It was almost 20 years ago today, give or take a few days, that President Lyndon B. Johnson looked at the millions of Americans ensnared in poverty without a chance of escape and said that all too many of our citizens live on the outskirts of hope: some because of income, and some because of race, and all too many because of both. He then proceeded to declare unconditional war on poverty, and for several years, this country made a number of valiant efforts.

Now, 20 years later, enthusiasm has waned, programs have been dismantled (and are being cut back and cut out), and our sense of urgency and purpose has indeed faded. We can't see the poor as well from comfortable suburbia. From there, we don't hear the hungry stomachs growl with emptiness, we don't feel the diseased bodies that are hot with fever of neglect, and we don't see the despair of the young who are ensnared and enslaved to stoop labor and fast-food-cleanup duties because of an improper education.

The educational status of Hispanics in this country is a national shame. Senator Carlos Truan and I met this past week and were talking about a problem that we have with regard to being able to have Hispanics become teachers. Too few graduate; too few can enter the programs because of competency testing. He told me that when he first met with Dr. J. W. Edgar, he was called a 20 percenter, because he was one of the 20 percent who graduated from high school.

Now, almost 20 years later, sadly but truly, we have made insufficient improvement. Hopefully, this summer, with the passage of House Bill 72, we made a new beginning in the quest for excellence in the education of Hispanics. This bill provided many areas of opportunity. One of those areas was that of teachers and teaching.

One of the provisions, in fact, was competency testing for all teachers, to make sure that our teachers who are working with our young people can read and can write. The bill provided a major salary increase, but it also provided for evaluation of performance, and it provided that once teachers are evaluated or appraised, those who have not had proper preparation will be provided with additional training. So we have a major opportunity not only in the training area in our colleges and universities but also in the retraining of inservice teachers, and we have some 170,000 teachers out there today who will be with us for the next 10 to 20 years. If those teachers are not properly trained to meet the special needs of the culturally diverse, limited English proficient, and poor children, then we need to equip those teachers properly.

House Bill 72 also provided new opportunities in the area of students. We have the opportunity now to bring in young children from disadvantaged backgrounds and from limited English proficient backgrounds at age four. This will be a wonderful opportunity, especially for our many children who come from backgrounds where English is not the primary language in the home. We also have kindergarten programs, full-day kindergartens. We also have an opportunity to reduce the student-to-teacher ratio at the primary level down to 22:1, so that individual attention can be given to the needs of the students. We also have the opportunity to expect more from our children. The passing grade of 70, the notification of parents if in fact students are not passing, the no-pass-no play rule, the provision for no social promotions, and alternatives to social promotions—all of these are saying that we are going to expect more from our young people. One of the sad but true truisms is that in the past, we very often have not expected enough of our young people. I can tell you this, that disadvantaged children, Hispanic children, and limited English proficient children can learn just as well as any child can learn, provided the proper programs are provided. But we must expect the children to learn. We must also provide the proper environment and the proper education. We must see that proper esteem is there in the children. If they are looked upon as second class citizens, if their language is looked upon as inferior, they cannot, in fact, have that self-esteem that is so important to success in the world today.

Perhaps one of the most important provisions and opportunities that we have in House Bill 72 is the opportunity of equity. We have had in the statutes for some time a provision that says that each student enrolled in the public school system shall have access to

programs and services that are appropriate to his or her educational needs and that are substantially equal to those available to any similar student. We have had the policy statement on equity for a long time. We have not had the financial distribution system to make that occur. For the first time, we have that now. We have made a significant improvement. Poor school districts now are receiving substantial increases in funding, and I can tell you that over the next several years, it is going to take a lot more funding. I am afraid that the taxpayers in this state are not prepared to face that yet—the reality of just how much it is going to cost, and I can assure you that on the state level, the legislature is not properly prepared at this time to realize the tremendous needs that we have for financial resources to meet the needs of the children.

The State Board of Education, the Texas Education Agency, and I, as Commissioner, are focusing on our failures of the past. But rather than dwelling on those past failures, we are looking at the problems that we have in the present, and what we want to do is to make sure that we ensure student success in the future. It is not enough just to spend more money. If we spend more money on programs that have failed and we buy things that are not going to make a difference, then we are not going to change the potential for children.

We must begin by listening to the Hispanic community, and that is why I am so delighted to be here today and to have this opportunity to meet with leaders from all over the state. As we look at what can be done to improve the excellence of the education of the Hispanic children, we must listen and we must understand that this has to be a joint and a coordinated effort. It must be an effort of the school, the community, and the parents. I believe that we *can* make a difference. I believe that we have a wonderful opportunity before us that will not come this way again. During the next few years, with the new State Board of Eduation and with the reforms of House Bill 72, a difference can be made—but *only* if everybody develops a sense of urgency and if everybody is committed individually and collectively to making that difference. Thank you for letting me be with you today.

MODERATOR'S REMARKS

Thank you very much, Commissioner. After hearing the Commissioner's remarks about budget, I must tell you that there are

no state funds supporting this symposium, and we are very delighted to have a couple of the private supporters of the symposium here today. The major supporter of the symposium is the Meadows Foundation of Dallas, and representing the Meadows Foundation is D Pascal.

GREETINGS FROM THE MEADOWS FOUNDATION

D Mattyson Pascal

The Meadows Foundation, a private philanthropical organization, is involved in this effort because we are aware that there is very credible research showing that Hispanic students enter high school with the same ambitions for academic excellence and career as any other group and that their parents are equally concerned about their education, and yet a huge proportion of this asset is being wasted, as was mentioned earlier. It isn't that the involvement of our Hispanic population will affect our state; the truth is that because of the population shift, the future of the arts, of science, of government depends on us—on Hispanics. The health of the economy, the future of education, and future political involvement all depend on us.

I cannot leave this podium without quoting one very esteemed Hispanic, my ***abuelita***, Dõna Josefina, who conversed in Spanish most of her life but who had ***dichos*** in four different languages, one for each and every occasion. I am reminded of one today that happens to be in English. She used this one when our family would gather to try to correct something that might have gone wrong. She would say, "Remember, we are here today to fix an error, not to fix the blame." I know that you are here to make something happen. We are very, very privileged to be a part of it, a small part of it, of bringing the best minds in the state together, and we appreciate, Dr. Cavazos, your leadership and the opportunity.

MODERATOR'S REMARKS

Thank you very much D. We do appreciate the support of the Meadows Foundation. We also have Mr. Mike Higgins, a Lubbock businessman, who is also a supporter of this. [Applause.] Thank you

very much, Mr. Higgins. There are other supporters of the symposium as well, who are not present today.

Now for the main event. Before the other main speakers leave, I am just going to introduce them briefly. We will keep President Cavazos up here, and the others may leave if they would like to get to a better position. We have Superintendent Raul Besteiro, who is the Superintendent of the Brownsville Independent School District and will be one of the speakers, and Ms. Norma Cantú who is also a major speaker. We will give them a better introduction at the appropriate time.

MODERATOR'S INTRODUCTION OF PRESIDENT CAVAZOS

Our keynote speaker is well known to all of you, I believe. Dr. Lauro Cavazos is President and Chief Executive Officer of both Texas Tech University and the Texas Tech University Health Sciences Center. While he is widely known on an international as well as a national level as an educator, his background includes a rich heritage of rural life in America. He grew up on the vast King Ranch in South Texas where his father was foreman for 43 years. It was there that he learned the skills of a cowboy that also helped him be a good university president, and it was in his home that he learned from his parents the value of education. He earned his bachelor's degree in zoology at Texas Tech University in 1949, and he is the first alumnus to serve Tech as president. His master's degree in physiology was earned at Texas Tech University in 1951, and Iowa State University awarded him a doctoral degree in physiology in 1954. He has been recognized as a distinguished alumnus by both Texas Tech and Iowa State.

In 1983, he received the Hispanic Educator of the Year Award from the Texas Chapter of the League of United Latin American Citizens. President Ronald Reagan presented him with an award for outstanding leadership in the field of education in 1984. He was awarded the Distinguished Service Medal by the Uniformed Services University for the Health Sciences in 1985.

Dr. Cavazos came to Texas Tech as President in April 1980 from Tufts University in Boston, where he was Dean of the School of Medicine for five years. He served as Chairman of the Texas Governor's Higher Education Management Effectiveness Council, the Governor's Task Force on Undocumented Workers, the Accreditation Study Committee of the Association of Texas Colleges and Universities, and the Vital Issues Project for Higher Education in Texas, and has served as a member of the Governor's Task Force on Higher Education. He is author or coauthor of approximately 75 publications in the areas of physiology of reproduction, fine structure of cells and tissue, and medical education. Dr. Cavazos holds many other offices and appointments to boards and committees. We are pleased and honored to have him as our keynote speaker, and his topic is "For Whom the School Bell Tolls."

FOR WHOM THE SCHOOL BELL TOLLS

Lauro F. Cavazos

Thank you very much. What a privilege it is to be here with you on this occasion.

I also want to extend a welcome. I want to welcome you most of all because you *care*. The very fact that you are here this morning tells me that you care, and caring is where we have to start in trying to direct our efforts toward really trying to solve what I consider one of the most serious problems facing our nation today.

Because you came to this meeting, I have very high expectations and high hopes that we will have a successful meeting. It is high time that we make something really good happen in education in this state. We are in trouble, and we need a lot of help, and we need a lot of guidance. All of that is right here. The skills we need are present here.

This symposium is not really to benefit just Hispanics; it is to benefit all of our society, because if any of our children fail, all of us are impoverished. Whether it's a minority or majority child doesn't make a particle of difference.

It is common for educators to get together. I so enjoyed watching you interact last night—friends from throughout the state of Texas who hadn't seen each other for a year, interacting about ideas and problems. And sure enough, I heard mentioned just about all of the problems superintendents talk about constantly. I found out about school principals and school boards. They came together, and that's common. But what makes this symposium unique is that for the first time we have educators and civic leaders sitting together to address the vital issues that concern us in higher education. That makes it different, and I agree, therefore, that we may be staggered sometimes by the dilemma of minority education. We ask how we are going to solve the dilemma in Texas. We are going to solve it in Texas by taking our problems community by community, school by school, and we need the help of the professional educators, and they, in turn, need the help of a supportive and informed public. We'll get to the specific problems and the kinds of support we need during this symposium.

Now you may think I'm diverging from the topic, but I'm not when I say I really appreciate architecture. If you look at our beautiful Tech

campus, it is obvious that the people in West Texas started out with a real appreciation of architecture. Yet for every school building in the country, I'd like to add one architectural feature. I'd like to install a loud, ringing school bell up in a steeple. That bell should ring every weekday morning, so that perhaps all who heard it would understand and be reminded of the profound importance of public education in America. Now we use electric buzzers, digital alarms, and other kinds of things, but somehow they just don't quite do as well. We have lost the symbol, an important symbol that said to the children, "Something important is about to happen to you. You are about to enter the school." It was that kind of public announcement that was a reminder for everybody.

It was the church bells tolling at certain times, the school bells tolling at a certain time, the fire bells or whatever it was; they announced to our community that something important was about to happen. Why not reinstall, in some way—in a symbolic way, though—that school bell.

I really doubt that all of you are going to run out and get new school bells, but nevertheless, think about it. There is some reason to regret the loss of that symbol. Americans, nationwide, have a huge problem, and we need to be regularly reminded about it. Most of you here know that 35 percent of the students who enter high school drop out before they graduate. That is probably an underestimate.

There are dropout problems within every ethnic group, and what we accomplish today, I hope, will help all students. But the massive attrition problem is most serious within our increasing Hispanic population. For these people, the dropout rate, as you are aware, is 45 percent.

Now demographers estimate that in 1985, the Hispanic population of the United States was about 19.5 million. Hispanics are the youngest population with a median age of 22, nine years younger than that of the whites other than Hispanics and three years younger than the black median. Population growth rates are also quite different, with the Hispanic rate of growth at six percent, that for the blacks at two percent, and that for the whites other than Hispanics at about 0.6 percent per year. Not only is the birth rate higher for Hispanics but then, of course, there is that profound flood of immigration that contributes to the increase.

We can understand some of the consternation in our border cities when we understand that the legal immigration quota for Mexico is 20,000 per year. Conservative estimates, however, indicate that we are receiving at least half a million people each year from Mexico alone.

Now people say that's a border problem. It's not a border problem only. It's a problem not only for the border states but also a problem for Chicago, Washington, Detroit, Los Angeles—wherever the issues are there. Then add to those half a million the thousands who are coming from Central America, South America, and the Caribbean. This tidal wave of newcomers is changing the entire fabric of society and changing it very, very fast. At the same time, we seem incapable of building into our essential public school systems enough flexibility to handle the change without lowering school standards and our own expectations. We seem to think that all parents have to do is bring in children to the kindergarten, and 13 years later they are going to come out with a diploma in hand, and that's it. Well, the system never did work that way and it never will. Public schools weren't established as isolated dumping grounds for children. They were established there for the benefit of the children and the benefit of our public. For more than two centuries, they have served us magnificently well.

Now, however, they are confronted with truly an overwhelming problem, and a lot of people do not appreciate the size of the problem. We have, among Hispanics, great numbers of families that are impoverished economically, socially, and worst of all, idealistically. All of them want a piece of what we call the American dream. But unlike so many of the earlier immigrants, too many of these undervalue education as a route to achieving their dreams.

The success of the solutions we are seeking today rests with our ability to establish or re-establish within all of our society a clear understanding of the value of education for all children, and the solution begins with caring.

Now we have heard all kinds of horror stories of teachers who encourage difficult students to drop out, and I am convinced that it probably happens. Yet I can't place the blame on the teachers who despair when faced with overcrowded classrooms, with students who don't care because their parents don't care, and with a lack of resources—both financial and professional—to help them deal with this disinterest and disruption and scholastic disaster. I have to ask myself, because I am teacher, what I would do if I were in an overcrowded classroom, in a border city, doing all of the teaching and all of the counseling for those students in a community that truly expects miracles. What would I do? I think I would fail miserably.

Our public school teachers and administrators cannot and should not accept sole responsibility for the education of our people. The responsibility lies within each of us, because the benefit will accrue to every one of us.

Our democracy has endured for more than 200 years because we have heeded the advice of the nation's founding fathers—that survival rests with an educated electorate. Without informed voters, we would most certainly lose the liberty that we cherish.

The media love to quote Thomas Jefferson frequently in terms of his defense of the freedom of the press. One of the favorite quotations is as follows: "Were it left to me to decide whether we should have a government without newspapers or newspapers without a government, I should not hestitate for a moment to choose the latter."

What the media usually fail to add is what Jefferson said after that: "But I should mean that every man should receive those papers and be capable of reading them."

Now Jefferson's remarks were not idle remarks. He devoted most of his later life after the presidency to promoting higher education. As you know, he helped establish the University of Virginia, contributing greatly to the educational thrust of our new nation. He knew, as we know, the truth—that an educated society is the only thing that stands, a very thin, fragile line, between ourselves and tyranny. Jefferson had a basic belief that the success of democracy rests with an educated electorate, with people who can read and comprehend, listen and analyze what they hear, people who can reason and apply logic in solving their problems.

We have to ask, What kind of leaders will uninformed people elect? Who will the illiterate follow? It is important that all America understand and know how important education is to our way of life. Liberty may be our heritage, but it cannot be passed from generation to generation. Each generation, ours and the generations that follow ours, must win it anew. Each generation must make its own struggle to preserve a free society.

For our liberties to survive, we must have people who can reason, evaluate, and apply logic that brings about peaceful solutions to social problems. Yet what do we have today?

Educators claim that one-third of the American adult population is functionally illiterate, lacking in the basic skills of reading, writing, and comprehension. We hear that nearly 40 percent of our 17-year-olds can't draw inferences from written material; only one-fifth, just 20 percent, can write a persuasive essay; and only one third can solve a mathematical problem that requires several steps.

In Texas, one recent study reported that 21 percent are illiterate and another 30 percent have severe difficulty in functioning in society, coping with everyday tasks. Is it not reasonable to assume

that among those who are intellectually handicapped are many Hispanics? Now we are not talking about low IQ's. We are talking about the undereducated. Many of them are as bright as you or I or brighter.

Statistics lead us to question what sort of society we shall have just 15 years from now, by the year 2000. The minorities in our public school today will be the majority then. That is going to be kind of interesting to call them majorities, I guess, at that time. But anyway, the 22 percent of the Texas population that is Hispanic—and is growing at a six percent rate—will already have made a considerable impact on our elections. Who will our elected leaders be in the year 2050? In the year 3000? Or will we have elections throughout the twenty-first century? To find the answers, all we have to do is apply a little bit of logic.

Jefferson was right when he said that any nation expecting to be ignorant and free expects what never was and never will be. For all of us who cherish our American freedoms, the educational imperative is clear, so clear; what we have to do is to discover strategies that can lead us to the goal of a well informed society.

We must seek financial, cultural, social, and educational strategies, and it would be ineffective to address each of those problems separately because they are intertwined; they all fit into a single package, an all-out attack on ignorance.

When we consider finances, there never seems to be enough money, and so we must allocate carefully the resources that we have. When we address cultural barriers, we're forced to address not only our own ignorance of the lives of Hispanics but also their ignorance of what we see as the American way of doing things. As we look at social barriers to our success, we must think in terms of financial equity, of course, but also in terms of opportunity. We must open doors, not slam them shut. As we develop educational strategies, we must keep in mind the changing workplace.

We dare not warehouse children. We dare not place them in educational tracks leading nowhere. We must keep in mind that the intellectual defense of our nation certainly is as important as, perhaps even more important than, our military defense. And if our strategies are to work effectively, we must bring Hispanics into the implementation process.

Those of us who spend our professional lives in education know that it is impossible to teach a student who isn't ready to learn. We know that. Forgetting this axiom, it seems to me, is one of the major flaws in our approach to public school service to minorities. Many of

them are not ready to learn, often because their home environment fails to nurture their inherent human desire to learn. Consequently, they don't learn, they get discouraged, and they drop out of school. As we seek to bring Hispanics into the mainstream of our democracy and the educational system that supports it, we must address with understanding the complexities they face as well as those that confront us.

It is important first to understand the diversity of the Hispanics of whom we speak. What we are experiencing today is unlike the great waves of Irish and German, and Italian immigration that happened into America. Hispanics are a diverse people. They come from many regions, from many cultures, and for many reasons. It is estimated that only slightly more than one half of those penetrating our southern border are from Mexico. Others, of course, are coming from the Caribbean, Central America, and South America—and that tide will not be stemmed. You could have the Immigration Service personnel holding hands all the way up and down the border, and they'd still get across. I guarantee you that. They'll get in here some way, because they recognize that the way out of their miseries, and their problems, and social oppression, and the other issues that are before them, can be addressed and straightened out in the United States.

Now most European immigrants of the nineteenth century were determined to educate the oldest son. That was the first step toward that American dream. Hispanics see things a little bit differently. Great numbers of the new immigrants today are totally unacquainted with the real purpose of education. Many are from bonded cultures, European and Native American. They have roots both in the Third World and in the great European Renaissance of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. Their roots are intertwined with those of the most daring of early explorers and with those of conquered masses. They come certainly with courage and hope, but their lifetime experience often has been the kind that shrinks vision and breeds hopelessness. Most needed, it appears to me, is the bolstering of their courage and encouragement of their hope.

Yet as we seek to do that, we have to remember that the newcomers who want that Yankee wealth and opportunity also view the Yankees with suspicion. They hear their culture is so different; their language is so different; and they will not adapt, on demand, to our traditional approaches to public education because our tradition is to them a radical departure from their tradition.

Their most immediate fear is economic—born of a need for dollars to feed, to clothe, and to house themselves. To them, education is secondary to survival. Within their cultures, they see education as a long-range risk, dollars as a short-range imperative. For their future and ours, an economic solution is important, but vital also is the cultural adjustment acquired through an educational system that they don't understand.

In addition to those broad areas we need to understand, there are also local problems each community must assess for itself. For instance, the *barrio* conditions can inhibit learning. Think, for instance, of the raucous inner-city community that teaches children to blot out the sounds and noises that they hear in the *barrio*. Think of children coming from these crowded, smothering, *barrio* homes. They may have difficulty learning and listening to a second language just because they have first learned not to listen. As children, they've been taught to blot out all irrelevant noises. These children must first be taught to listen, then to learn the sounds of new language.

It is difficult for that child to learn to listen and to interact. It is just as difficult for them as for an isolated rural child who has to learn to interact socially for the first time.

When we deal with such specific special problems within each community and each school, it is easy to see why a grass-roots approach is essential—perhaps more likely to succeed—than our programs that are mandated at the state and federal level. And we are not dealing with just one problem. Although we work to educate Hispanics throughout our nation, the big problem is only the sum of problems specific to individual communities and schools.

Where we discover common problems, solutions can be shared. Where we discover problems that are uncommon, there is an overriding need for flexibility that allows educators the initiative to develop creative, innovative solutions outside of the traditional patterns. We must let them do it. With Hispanics as with blacks or with Native Americans, such flexibility is particularly important because of the strong cultural patterns that can be changed only over time or that should not be changed at all.

There are many things that must be presented within those traditions. For example, the family unit usually is the strongest tie that the Hispanic children have. They tend to look within the family for those role models.

Let's turn for a moment to those 55 percent of the Hispanic students who do stay in school and who do earn an education—get

a high school diploma. We can agree that role models are important for them. You find parents and families that do support education.

In my own case, I grew up in a rather isolated part of the world. It's a beautiful world. My father—I remember his admonition—and I bet that a number of you have heard this: "Son, educate yourself. It's the one thing that no one can ever take from you." You've all heard that. And because I had loving parents, I followed their direction and their advice. Perhaps I wasn't always the best student, but I tried. And certainly there are Hispanic families who value education, who sacrifice greatly for their children to attend school, and who place the highest hopes for the future on the schools that you people out there are operating today.

Yet too often we overlook the strength of the family tie. Too often Hispanic parents are shunted outside of the educational loop. If they don't speak English, their school problems are compounded. Can you imagine how many parent-teacher organizations make Hispanic parents feel kind of unwelcome because they really can't communicate with them? How many schools have parent programs that allow Hispanics to gather in small groups to discuss common problems with one another—and with teachers and administrators? Whose parents do the teachers know the best? The parents of students with minor problems? Or parents of the ones with really major problems, the serious problems?

If the family is central to the Hispanic culture, do we take this factor into consideration in choosing strategies to reduce that dropout rate? Of one thing we can be sure: we shall not readily change that Hispanic cultural pattern. Understanding that as a given factor, the commonsense strategy for educators is to make the cultural pattern work to the advantage of the school.

If the given factor in a family situation is economic crisis, the commonsense solution may well be a work-study program for students, where industry provides students jobs as long as students are in school. If they drop out, they lose their jobs.

If the given factor is that Hispanics lack understanding of the educational system, then common sense dictates that counselors be trained and encouraged to explain the system in terms the Hispanic family can understand. You've got to have exquisite counselors—excellent counseling and direction. Until parents understand, children can't.

Time and again, Hispanic students tell researchers that the single most important factor in their education is a caring adult. Their education is keyed to finding people who care about them. If that's

the given factor, each of us carries the responsibility for caring. That's why I greeted you, "Thank you for your caring attitude." And it is not enough to accept Hispanic students in the Head Start programs or kindergarten. It is not enough to give Hispanic students an elementary school education or to short-change them by channeling the hard to teach into dead-end tracks.

Educators on every level must care for every child at every level. But we must do even more. We must educate all of society to the importance of solving educational problems. While only 27 percent of our population has children in school, the quality of life for the other 73 percent is certainly greatly affected by shoddy education. Educators and civic leaders would do well to form partnerships to get this message across to all the nation, and we could start right here in Texas.

The education of our children is probably the best insurance society can provide us with for its future welfare—economically and socially. Education is everybody's business. School teachers and administrators don't need meddling in the business that they do best. But they most assuredly need support for their efforts. Together we can work out and find the ways to garner support from parents and from the public at large.

Parents, particularly Hispanic parents, need to be educated to the role of the school in providing for the future welfare of their children. The public must be made increasingly aware that the loss of a mind to the benefit of society is indeed a terrible, terrible loss. Sentencing just one child to a lifetime of ignorance diminishes us all.

I'm frequently reminded of the enduring words of John Donne in an essay that he wrote over 400 years ago about a tolling funeral bell. Although he wrote of death, he also wrote about our interdependence in life. I'm sure that every one of you remembers his words: "No man is an island entire of itself. Every man is a piece of the continent, a part of the main. If a clod be washed away by the sea, Europe is the less, as well as if a promontory were, as well as if the manor of thy friends or of thine own were. Any man's death diminishes me, because I am involved in mankind. And therefore never send to know for whom the bell tolls. It tolls for thee."

Now what is true of the funeral bell is also true of the school bell. It rings for all of us. The quality of our public schools can be measured precisely by the degree to which we care whether or not our children are properly educated. The quality of our democracy and the extent of our freedom can be measured precisely by the degree to which we care whether or not all of our children are educated to

function well in society. As the loss of any person diminishes my life, the success of any man or woman enriches my life. And that success adds a richness to the fabric and heritage of our nation and to all people. And just so, the loss of any mind to our society diminishes me and it diminishes you. Likewise, the intellectual growth of any mind enriches me and you and the free society in which we live. As we have all been involved in mankind, we are all involved in the education of our children. We have no need to ask for whom the school bell tolls; it tolls for each of us, for me and for you. This symposium should help us discover strategies that can move forward the education of Hispanics in Texas. What we are all searching for are practical strategies that are both cost-effective and useful in moving us on toward the goals and objectives we must achieve in our time. As you refine your planning, you will help us to devise systems that measure successes and help us blot out failures. As with all great ideas though, there will be failures on the first try. As B. F. Skinner pointed out "A failure is not always a mistake. It may simply be the best one that we can do under the circumstances. The real mistake is to stop trying."

What we at Texas Tech hope most of all today is that you will find the symposium a beginning place for reaching effective solutions. What we discover here and in the months that follow should be of great value to our fastest-growing minority population. But it should also benefit children—all children everywhere. Even more, to the degree our strategies succeed, all of the American society will be enriched. We must not stop trying. Thank you.

MODERATOR'S REMARKS

Thank you very much Dr. Cavazos for those inspiring and insightful words. You have just set the tone for our afternoon session.

MODERATOR'S INTRODUCTION OF NORMA CANTU

One next major speaker is Norma Cantú. Norma is a 1971 graduate of Brownsville High School. She received a B.A. degree from Pan American University in 1973 and her J.D. degree from the Harvard Law School in 1977. She has several distinctions. First of all, she graduated from high school at the age of 16 in the top five percent of her class. She completed undergraduate study *summa cum laude* in two and one-half years with double majors in English and government and a minor in education. Then she enrolled in the Harvard Law School at the ripe old age of 19.

She is currently director of the Western Region Education Program of the Mexican American Legal Defense and Educational Fund, Incorporated, (MALDEF), of San Francisco. From July 1979 to September 1983, she worked as a staff attorney in the San Antonio regional office of MALDEF. She also worked for one year in the Texas Attorney General's office in the Consumer Protection Division. Norma has also taught eighth grade English in a predominantly minority school in eastside San Antonio, and she taught ninth grade English at the same high school from which she graduated in Brownsville. She has spoken often on bilingual education and issues concerning Hispanic education. Norma Cantú is well qualified to speak to us on the topic "Hispanics Creating Excellence." It my pleasure to present to you Norma Cantú.

HISPANICS CREATING EXCELLENCE

Norma Cantú

After people hear about my prodigious achievements at so early an age, they frequently ask, "But what have you done recently?" I'll tell you what we have done recently. I am very honored and very proud to address this group today. I have to admit that I was a little concerned. I'm very pleased that it is a friendly crowd. I have had the experience of addressing what I don't consider to be a friendly crowd, including the Texas Association of Chiefs of Police. I addressed them twice. The first time, I berated them because the chiefs of police allowed so much abuse of their Hispanic prisoners. They loved it. The more I berated them, the more they enjoyed it. They asked me back! The second time I berated them about the fact that they did not respond to domestic violence calls by women. They loved it. They asked me back! The third time I did not go. I told them, "This is sick! There is something wrong with you chiefs of police. You like for me to come in here and tell you what you are doing wrong, and then you don't change." If they had changed, I would have come back, but they were still doing the same things.

Another crowd that I addressed was in Austin. I met with the Brown Berets. Immediately afterward, they had had a very physical, very violent encounter with the Austin police, and the Brown Berets showed me their scars. One of the women, about my height and weight, had a new hair style, because whereas she had previously parted it in the middle, she now had so many scars that she had to part it on the side. The president of the Brown Berets showed me his scars from his broken ribs, and another one showed me evidence of the beatings he had about his neck and shoulders. We sat in a cafe in eastside Austin, and I can tell you, I was quite depressed. I felt for my people. We sat there in silence after they had described what they had gone through—how the Ku Klux Klan had marched through downtown Austin and how the police had chosen to beat on the Hispanic protestors, and in this silence, I could not think what topic of conversation to bring up next. I thought, How are we going to prioritize what we are going to do with this community?

Then the silence was broken and one of the *hispanos* interrupted and said, "Orale, Norma. We have another problem we want to talk about." (And I was thankful because the community itself was

suggesting what their priority would be.) "Orale, Norma. What are we going to do about the Pizza Hut? They don't want to deliver pizza to the east side of Austin." [Laughter.] We did not decide to sue. They might have awarded pizzas as part of the judgment, so we didn't sue.

Conferences such as we have today are important because they do help us prioritize. They do help us discern those issues that we think are the most pressing, the most important, and those that really are today's issues and must be dealt with immediately. Conferences like the one today are important because you have resource people before you who can give you feedback on your own local experiences. As part of the information I want to present today, I want to give you a very quick update on some recent court cases, so that you can go back to your local communities and report that you have received something educational, and then you'll get your vouchers reimbursed. Then I also want to highlight some areas in which MALDEF is moving, and conclude, I hope, within the time allotted.

SPECIAL EDUCATION CASES

First, some important cases that we have noted and we have been involved in in the past one or two years. One very recent Supreme Court case that just came out in the *U.S. Law Week* involved special education, and we find that case important, because it expands the amount of time to be allocated to special education students. In that decision, the United States Supreme Court found that even though special education students had reached age 18, and even though a state did not provide public school education beyond age 18, since those students had not yet received all of the courses required for graduation, the state was required to extend their education—to provide them an opportunity to receive a high school diploma. That recent decision reinforces our belief (and this is the lawyers' community I'm referring to) that the Supreme Court still sees education as an important issue and still will continue to afford opportunities for students.

A similar decision along this same line was the Undocumented School Children Decision. Again, the issue was whether students would have an opportunity to learn. Rather than doom an entire class of students to a future of illiteracy, again, the United States Supreme Court ruled that undocumented students had the right to a free public education.

THE EQUAL EDUCATION OPPORTUNITY ACT

At lower levels of education, we have had numerous victories in federal courts, using what is called the Equal Education Opportunity Act of 1974, or EEOA. It was a law passed in 1974, which placed on institutions of education the responsibility to eliminate barriers facing students of limited English proficiency. The EEOA, this federal law, has been used against state after state, district after district, to guarantee the rights of language-minority students.

We have never lost a suit using the Equal Education Opportunity Act. The state of Idaho, the state of California, the state of Texas, a school district in Denver—all of those have found that they must meet the education needs of language minority students. Just this Tuesday, just this week, MALDEF filed a statewide case in Illinois called, *Gomez* v. *Illinois State Board of Education*. We used the Equal Education Opportunity Act in federal court. We are asking the state of Illinois to identify properly the number of language minority students in that state. Because we have learned from experts, educators such as yourself, that as many as ten thousand to twenty thousand students have not been counted; and that of those students who have been counted, as many as five to ten thousand are receiving no program whatsoever—not a bilingual program, not an ESL program. They are basically in a sink-or-swim situation. So the lawsuit that we filed Tuesday is the most recent in a string of lawsuits that MALDEF has been involved in.

TITLE VI CASES

We are also involved in a suit using Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964. Title VI is the part of the Civil Rights Act that applies to institutions receiving federal funding. Title VI prohibits discrimination against language minority, national origin students. We have used Title VI to cause the Federal Office of Civil Rights to follow more speedy timetables in enforcing laws against local school districts. The suit is called *Adams* v. *Bennett*. In *Adams* v. *Bennett*, we have caused the Office for Civil Rights to follow 60 and 90-day timetables. They must investigate complaints within 60 days. They must issue findings within 90 days. Now what is critical about the *Adams* case is that it has been in litigation since 1970, and yet we still do not have a speedy response from the Office of Civil Rights. When we intervened, we did so because none of the complaints filed by Hispanics were being investigated. Well, they are being investigated now, but we still do not have any findings. They will not issue a finding against the school district.

HIGHER EDUCATION

In Texas, the *Adams* case created the Texas Higher Education Plan. Because of the pressure applied through the *Adams* case, the Office for Civil Rights began an investigation against the state of Texas. That investigation was never concluded. Formal findings were never issued, which is the pattern for the Office for Civil Rights. However, we did have a positive conclusion that what the *Adams* case created was a statewide higher education equal-opportunity plan that covers all 107 campuses in the state. The plan covers admission, retention, graduation writs, admission to graduate schools, employment, and governance. Sadly, it does not cover funding, and for that reason, we consider it to be a weak plan, and MALDEF is still working to try to strengthen that plan.

SCHOOL FINANCE

In the area of resources, a case has been filed on behalf of eight school districts and numerous individuals, a suit called *Edgewood* v. *Bynum* (and now that we have a new commissioner of education it is *Edgewood* v. *Kirby*). One of our clients is Superintendent Besteiro here. The *Edgewood* v. *Kirby* suit alleges that too much emphasis is placed on the local property tax basis for the funding of public education. And yes, it is true that during the last session, major reform occurred in pumping in necessary resources for public schools. But the basic system, which allows property-rich districts to raise 10 times as many resources as property-poor districts, those inequities still exist, and yes, there is still a need for that suit.

Following on a decision called *Serrano*, in California, which is another school finance case, MALDEF will be filing a case in Los Angeles, alleging intra-district school finance disparity. This is a novel idea. Rather than alleging disparity from one district to the next, we are looking at one school district, the Los Angeles Unified, and have noted a pattern. There are 16,000 empty classroom seats in affluent white parts of the city. There is criminal overcrowding in the minority East Los Angeles, where so much overcrowding exists that the children are being taught in hallways and school cafeterias. So much overcrowding exists that the students are going through split schedules, dual schedules, extended days. So much overcrowding exists that when this district decided to open a new school, they went underground. They took a park, dug a hole, put the school in the hole, then put the park back up on top. So the children are being taught underground in Los Angeles. The state will not provide

construction monies because of the 16,000 empty classroom seats in underutilized, predominently white schools, and the school district will not desegregate.

ELECTIONS

In the area of elections, we have found the need for bringing challenges to at-large election schemes against school districts and community colleges. Those of you who have been following the school district elections in New Mexico will know that less than two weeks ago, the state legislature there took new action. MALDEF joined with the Southwest Voter Registration Project and filed more than a dozen lawsuits in New Mexico against school districts. In more than eight of those lawsuits, we have received injunctions in our favor or final judgments in our favor. We have not lost any lawsuits in that state. After eight losses against the state, the insurance companies that backed the state government and provided the resources to defend these cases met with the state leadership and explained to them that their defense of at-large elections was a loser. More than that, the insurance companies refused to continue to fund lawsuits that were clearly going to be decided against school districts. The legislature met, and in a quick session did away with at-large election schemes for all jurisdictions with 13,000 or more people. This is all school districts in the state; they have been mandated to have single-member districts. This is for the entire state of New Mexico, and we are very proud of that action.

EMPLOYMENT AND AFFIRMATIVE ACTION

In the area of employment, we are finding ourselves in a situation in which we have lost an ally. The Department of Justice of the United States used to be our ally in pursuing affirmative action plans against school districts and against municipalities. Less than two weeks ago, the Department of Justice issued a letter to 42 defendants and cases urging them to drop their affirmative action plans. The Department of Justice cited a case called *Stotts*. The case covered retirement benefits; it did not cover hiring, and yet the Department of Justice took a very broad and liberal reading of the Supreme Court decision and urged the municipalities to drop their affirmative action plans. I am proud to say that the municipalities said, "No way. We have made tremendous progress with our plans, and we do not intend to drop those efforts."

In the area of employment, we are also looking very closely at litigation against teacher competency tests that do not truly measure teacher competency. What they measure is whether you are a native-born English speaker and whether you can respond within the time allocated for the written standardized test. If it were truly a teacher competency test, it would measure how a person communicates in a classroom. If it were truly a teacher competency test, it would measure whether the students taught actually graduated and can actually read and write. But the teacher competency tests that have been chosen have not even been taken by the legislators who have selected these tests, and I do not know how many would pass if they had to take them.

CREATING EXCELLENCE

Having concluded a very brief overview (and I know that I have left out a lot of areas), I am going to move on to some questions. My questions are: Who will create excellence? One potential candidate, one group of candidates would be our economists, the people who set our budgets. Will they create excellence? I say no. Not now, not when we are having budgets cut, when we have freezes on bilingual education. Just this past month, the President's budget came out, and it authorized a freeze on bilingual education monies. It also prohibited spending any monies on ESL for adults. So will we get our answers from economists? No. Not if economists see school resources as a pie, a pie with limited resources, so if you draw from one part of the pie, you must necessarily lose from the other part of the pie. Our human resources are not a part of a pie. We have infinite human resources. This conference is a testament to that. Our economists will not give us an answer if they fear failure. One example, someone who did not fear failure, was a very important person who ran for elector and lost, who ran for senator and lost, who ran for speaker of the house and lost, and who tried to be a successful businessman and lost. I'm speaking of Abraham Lincoln. This is the man who walked through the snow to return two pennies. Now what kind of a successful businessman is that? If the conclusion to be drawn by economists is that less is more, then I don't think we will create excellence by relying solely on their advice.

Will we create excellence by deferring to the advice of lawyers? I say no. While economists cut programs, lawyers cut deals. It is by the nature of the training of the legal profession that we are taught to compromise. As I sat on an airplane on my way over here, I sat next to an attorney who defended personal injury cases, and he told me,

"Give me a plaintiff's attorney who will overestimate what he wants. Give me someone with a $500,000 case who wants $1 million for it. Him I like. I can settle that case for $600,000 and go back to my client and say, 'See? I saved you $400,000.' Him I like. But give me a lawyer who comes against me with a $5,000 claim and asks for $6,000. I compromise it for $5,500 and I've only saved my client $500. I don't look like a hero to my client."

Now I am a member of that profession, but I do not believe that this is what education needs. When we are talking about the minds of children, we do not have room to compromise. We cannot be giving up. We must go for the maximum of opportunity that we can have for our children. There is no room for compromise. We have been fortunate that some courts have not compromised. The examples I gave of the special education decision, the undocumented school children case, our *U.S.* v. *Texas* bilingual education decision in this state—these are examples where courts have not compromised. But those instances are few and far between, and the major problem is that if we defer to the judges to take care of our schools, we would be in litigation for so many years that we would truly live out the maxim of "justice delayed is justice denied." The Houston case, for example, has been in litigation, and was finally concluded after 28 years! The *Adams* case I mentioned, against the Office of Civil Rights, has been in litigation for 15 years; Austin, 10; Lubbock, 15; Odessa—I mean that's a neophyte; it has been in litigation for only four years, that's a baby. We do not have that time. We will make that time, but we cannot place all of our resources on the courts and expect the courts to turn around quickly and provide us with quick solutions. It will not happen.

Shall we expect the creation of excellence to occur from our business community? Yes, we will depend upon them, but shall we solely count on the business people? Again, no. Rather than cut deals, we unfortunately have some business people who cut out mavericks. They cut out the creative minds, and that hurts us. We have not placed enough emphasis on people with advanced degrees in this country. Our business sector really cries out for a broader base, and we need people with advanced liberal arts degrees. I was reading about the Sony Corporation in Japan, which hired a poet as part of its business group because they felt that the person who wrote poetry provided a balance to that team that made for a more cohesive working experience for all employees, and with having a balanced business group, the employees were likely to remain with the corporation rather than move on to some other company that offered

them a better package. I will ask businessmen to contribute, but we need businessmen who donate directly to schools rather than the Chamber of Commerce to improve their public image. We need to go to the substance. I will not turn solely to business people for an answer.

EDUCATORS CREATING EXCELLENCE

Who decides? Who contributes? Who creates excellence? I think that it is educators. I think that it is educators and parents. Educators are qualified because only educators appreciate the potential of each school child. In California, I heard a speaker who talked about the potential of a child to learn words. It was fascinating. If you open an unabridged dictionary and you look at the top word on the right hand column and you ask yourself, "Do you know that word?" You probably do. If you flip the page, you probably know the next word. If you were to do a random sample, you probably would know half of those words at the top of the pages. With a dictionary with 325,000 words, you probably know 165,000 of those words.

How did you learn them? This educator told me that when children enter kindergarten, they know some 10,000 words already. Do you know how many words per minute that would come out to in the short lifetime of that child? I think that's fantastic!

One teacher went up to the educator after the meeting and said, "Look, I don't believe your statistics. I sit every week with the kids and their spelling list, and they can't learn 20 words a week." And the educator said, "Well, they must be learning the words when they are not learning the spelling list from you."

Educators with vision, educators who believe children can learn and that children are able to absorb knowledge almost involuntarily—almost against their will—educators like that are going to create excellence. They are the ones who are going to make it possible for us to change conditions in Texas and in other states. Educators must be empowered. We must believe that we have the power, and I speak as a teacher myself. We must believe that there are more of us like LBJ out there who was also a Texas educator. There are more of us out there in this audience, in this state. Parents are qualified to create excellence because they have already taken up the reins in some school districts. And whether we want them to or not, parents are becoming more and more involved in the running of the schools. In San Francisco, parents served on mini-school boards. There are small school boards that are set up in each different community, in each different neighborhood, and parents

elect parents to serve on those small school boards. In Houston, parents go up to the school district and check out computers to be used in the evening when the children are not in school and the computers are not being used and are just sitting there. Parents check those out and practice with them at home so that they can practice the homework with their own kids. So parents want to participate. What's holding them back, I really think, is a lack of training. I really think that parents need to know how to spend quality time with their sons and daughters. They are spending hours and hours of time with their sons and daughters, but they are sitting in front of the TV set, and we can change that. One step at a time, educators and parents working together *can* create excellence in the education of young people.

MODERATOR'S INTRODUCTION OF RAUL BESTEIRO

Mr. Besteiro has worked as an educator in the Brownsville School District for all of his career. He started out in 1958 as a teacher of biology and science. He then became the science department head at Brownsville High School and continued to teach biology, chemistry, and advanced science. He then became Assistant Principal at Brownsville High School and also continued to teach advanced science classes. In 1968, Mr. Besteiro became principal of Brownsville High School. Moving on up the ladder, on August 1, 1974, he became Deputy Superintendent in Brownsville. On December 1, 1976 he assumed his present position of Superintendent of Schools of Brownsville Independent School District.

Superintendent Besteiro belongs to numerous professional organizations including the American Association of School Administrators, the National Education Association, College Entrance Examination Board, and Phi Delta Kappa. He has served on numerous state and national committees and task forces including Governor White's Transition Team, the Governor's Committee for Standards and Goals for Texas, and Governor White's Task Force on Immigration. He is listed in the 1983 edition of the most prominent educators in Texas. He has frequently testified before congressional committees particularly on issues dealing with immigration, aliens, and undocumented students. And he is also a lifetime member of the National Railroad Train Collectors. His topic today will be "Economic Challenges of Poor School Districts." It is my pleasure to introduce to you Mr. Raul Besteiro, Superintendent of the Brownsville Independent School District.

ECONOMIC CHALLENGES OF POOR SCHOOL DISTRICTS

Raul Besteiro, Jr.

Thank you very much for that great introduction. It is indeed a pleasure to be here today to address such a tremendous group. It is a hard job to follow such a great act. You know, I feel like the actor who went to New York, and was looking for a part in a Broadway production, and finally found a part. It was in the third act, just like it is today, and he had one line. All he had to do was run out on stage and say, "Hark! I hear a cannon." He went back and had three months to work on that one line, "Hark! I hear a cannon." (I feel this way today.) All of a sudden, it's time for the play, and he is backstage, looking at the mirror and practicing, "Hark! I hear a cannon. Hark! I hear a cannon." He is working at it really hard when all of a sudden, it is the third act, and he's on, and they give him his cue, and he runs out on stage. Just as he runs out, this huge cannon goes "BOOM!" And he says, "What in the hell was that?"

So as I walked out here right now, and Norma had done such a beautiful job, and so had Lauro, I said, "My God! Boom! What the hell am I going to do up there?"

I was thinking that they should have called this the Brownsville Affair here in Lubbock, Texas. Norma is one of my former students, and Dr. Cavazos' family lived half a block from where I was born, and that's where his roots are. So all of us sitting here at this table really come from Brownsville. You can imagine how much Brownsville has produced.

One of the greatest feelings about being last, or cleanup hitter, is that it's fun to come up and say they not only saved the best but the biggest for last. This always helps, you know. Everybody says, "There is one thing about you, Raul; you carry a lot of weight." And I sure do, and I feel it every day when I walk.

I love the job that I do or I wouldn't be here today. I've been in it for 27 years. As I speak to you today, I'm not only speaking as the Superintendent of the Brownsville Independent School District, but I am speaking for everybody in the lower Rio Grande Valley of Texas. I have fellow superintendents who are here today, and board members, and I hope that they will agree with what I have to tell you.

Our part of Texas is known as the Magic Valley, and right now it is probably known as the Tragic Valley. The reason for this is that in the Valley of Texas, where we have 44 school districts, and most of these districts are manned by Hispanic superintendents, we have to prove ourselves every day, when we get up, to our own communities. It's one of the hardest things in the world. Very few people realize that in the state of Texas there are 1,070 districts—give or take a few. I don't know how many we've lost today, and out of those 1,070 districts, there are fewer than 40 superintendents who are of Hispanic origin. Most of those superintendents are in the lower Rio Grande Valley of Texas. And we don't have it made down there—don't ever kid yourself—because we face some of the greatest problems of educating children in the state.

I am very fortunate that I have a very large school district, and I can boast about being probably number 16 in size in the state, maybe 15, depending on how many kids entered school this morning at Brownsville. Some of you might say, "Well, what do you mean 'this morning'?" One of the things that we have along the border is that we do not know on a day-to-day basis how many students we are going to be receiving that we have to educate. And we cannot turn these students down.

Today, we may be getting four new students from Mexico right now, walking into our school district, to try to find a way to get a new way of life and a new education. Some of these students may never have been in a classroom. Some of these students may never have known what it is to learn just the vowels in Spanish, and yet we have to take these students, and we have to place them in our classrooms with our teachers. Sometimes our teachers get frustrated, because all year long, they face this problem of new students.

A couple of years ago, the Brownsville School District had the title, which we don't really care to have, of being the fastest-growing district in Texas. But when you are getting more than 1,000 students from Mexico coming into your district, you have a heck of a problem. I noticed in the program, you know, that we build a classroom every 14 days. While we are building the classroom every 14 days, we are just trying to keep up with the needs and the growth, but right now, we are trying to get ahead. What we received from the state of Texas this year, from our legislators, was a tremendous help. You can imagine the Brownsville School District, which serves 32,000 students, is in a town that has a population of 88,000. This is above the norm in the whole country. I think the norm in the country is that 15 percent of the population is school age, and here, if you take our

outer limits and say we have 100,000 population, we still have nearly 33 percent in school.

So the problem in our community is to try to keep up the education of these children and give them the best education possible, to find the teachers to come down to Brownsville to teach these children, and to make them leaders for the future. Right now, the Brownsville School District needs more teachers than Pan American University at Brownsville and Pan American University at Edinburg, and Texas A&I University at Kingsville can produce. I think that their total, and George's here, is 303 teachers will be graduating, and we need 320.

And what about McAllen, Rio Grande City, Roma, Harlingen, Raymondville, and every other town in the Valley. We probably need a thousand teachers in the Valley today, and we have to go searching. My personnel officer is up in the northern part of the country in Wisconsin, at New Hope College in Michigan, and in Indianapolis where they are going to be cutting teachers, trying to recruit teachers to come down to the Golden Valley, the Magic Valley, and be able to take care of our children. But when we go and recruit these types of teachers, they want to go back home sometime, too. They are not home grown. Every time that we get teachers that are home grown, they are going to stay, and they are going to be the future of our schools. Whenever we have to go out and recruit, some will stay, but some want to go back as times get better in their states. Fortunately, for them, times are getting better up north, and as schools need more teachers, they are going to stay up north and we are going to have a shortage of teachers.

One of the things that I worry about continuously is, How do we lower our teacher-to-student ratio to the state-mandated 22 to 1 if we have no teachers available? Somebody says, "Well, what about classrooms?" Well, fortunately, three years ago the city of Brownsville saw fit to give the Brownsville Independent School District a $48 million bond issue. We went out to our citizens, as administrators, and we laid it on the line, and we told them what we needed. We needed $70 million. We could not take care of $70 million because we had been working with our bankers and with everybody, trying to put pennies away so that we could fund a bond issue that would not increase our taxes. We passed the $48 million bond issue with donations from all of my principals of $20 apiece, so that we could have some kind of advertising, and with less than $600, we went out and talked to everybody and passed the bond issue three to one. We passed it on the basis that we would build $12 million worth of new

construction every two years, without increasing taxes, never dreaming that we were going to have House Bill 72 and *Chapter 75, TAC* coming our way, but hoping that we could catch up.

I've always felt, as a superintendent, that one of the biggest problems we face is that it is just like when you are at a track meet, and you are running the 440, and everybody else is halfway down the track and we are just getting off the blocks. We intend to catch everybody, but we have to find that superhuman strength to be able to end the race right in there among the top—first, second, or third. Well, the $48 million was going to do this. It was going to give us the extra boost. We would be able to air-condition our schools. Our schools are not air-conditioned, except for our high school. This also poses a real threat to the learning situation because I think that everybody will agree that children will learn better in a nice, cool, and comfortable environment, and our teachers can do a better job.

Then all of a sudden we find ourselves with legislation lowering the pupil-teacher ratio, which I think is one of the greatest things that has been passed in this state. If nothing else ever comes about, smaller classes will enable our teachers to do a better job. I think that we really have to go forth on this.

The second best part of the new reform legislation, I think, is the prekindergarten that we needed so badly. In studies of children, I find that 80 percent of their brain development is from birth to age three. One of the things I fear today is that we do not have the ability to train the parents to be able to train those children so that those brains can be developed in a very positive way so as to facilitate learning. A problem that we face in our area is that our parents are working hard just to make an everyday living. They don't have the time to sit down and work on a one-to-one basis with their children as the more affluent people do sometimes, so that their children can learn the ABC's, and the colors, and everything else. So therefore, we are losing the opportunity, the golden opportunity, to work with the children and develop their minds at the critical age when their minds are ready to take in everything that is thrown at them in a way that would really be a benefit to them in the future.

Yet we have 20 percent left, and that is where our teachers come in, those prekindergarten teachers and those prekindergarten classrooms that we are in the process of trying to build this year (and trying to find teachers for those classrooms). Then we can take that 20 percent, and develop it, and make those pupils the leaders of the future. We have to really work on this. I think that the lowering of class size and the prekindergarten requirement are two of the greatest things that can happen in our educational reform.

Third, I believe that we have to look at the overall picture. At one time, most of the people in the state looked at the reforms very negatively. I think that we all have to make sure we are always ready for change and can adapt to change. One of the things I fear more than anything else (and I get into it sometimes) is that as I talk to fellow superintendents, the first thing that comes out in the conversation is how many years it is before one of us can retire. Do you know what that means to this state? Every time a superintendent retires early, you are losing a certain amount of experience that you can never gain again.

Another problem today is that as all of these reforms were set into practice, administrators were left out totally. One of the things that hurts the most is that administrators were told, "You are not going to get a raise; we do not want you to do anything but go to work every day." I would like to see this state work one full day without any administrator being present in the schools. It would be just fantastic to see elementary schools, junior high schools, high schools, and school districts all work, and let all of the administrators go fishing for one day and see what would happen. Who do you think worries about how the buses get there in the morning, how the kids are going to behave in the cafeteria, what happens after school while the tutorial programs are working, did the custodians cut the grass, and is the broken water faucet being taken care of? And now, who has to evaluate the teachers hour after hour? All of this burden is being placed on the administrators, and yet administrators were pushed to one side. I'm not here making a pitch for administrators, but I think it's a hand-in-hand situation. The state of Texas has a beautiful system. You have a board, and the board is elected to set policy, and the administrators are appointed by the board to carry out this policy. Then the head administrator makes sure that he or she finds the right administrators to carry out the policy, to make that the best district there is.

Never was the intention of a board to be there to tell administrators who to fire, who not to fire; who to make principals, and who not to make principals. The intention was always that they would administer a district to the best of their ability, and today one of the greatest things that is going by the wayside is the talent of administrators who are not allowed to administer the way that they know how and the way that they have been taught.

When I started, I said that Hispanics had to prove themselves every day, harder and harder, and that is true. We prove ourselves to our community. We don't have to prove ourselves to the rest of the state, but we prove ourselves to our community. We have to make sure that

our students show growth. When I took over as superintendent, nine years ago, we went back and looked at the amount of money that we had spent in Brownsville with Title I funds; it was fantastic. Then when we started looking at our test scores, they were going down all the time, so all the money was going to waste. So I had a real heart-to-heart talk with all of my administrators, and I told them that the one thing I believe in (and I *firmly* believe in this) is that a child must learn how to read. If a child does not know how to read, you can throw away everything else. So in Brownsville, nine years ago, we went into what we called block reading, and we started having one hour during the day when everybody in every school in Brownsville, except for the high school, would be into a block reading situation. Little by little, we started seeing some results. The scores started to come up. In the last few years, although we are not at any national norm or a state norm, our scores have been coming up continuously, because we have dedicated ourselves to getting our children into a pattern where they are going to learn how to read.

We have also told our administrators that they have the right to set their prescription for their school. Call it whatever you wish; we call it a prescription. I like the analogy of a pharmacy where every one of our administrators comes in at the end of the year and says, "This is what I feel comfortable with for next year, and this is what I think I can accomplish."

At the end of the year, as we look at the scores, and as we look at our progress, we either grade them yea or nay, and some of them feel really bad if their school has not made progress and they have to go back to the drawing boards. The beautiful thing about it is that we are all human. We are not robots. Every school within my district (23 elementary schools) functions differently. I cannot tell one school on one side of town that what another school is doing will work in their situation over there. I allow them that flexibility; they have the right to make something work. This is very important, because my principals *must* have this flexibility in order to be successful.

Now the other thing that comes into the picture is that on a year-to-year basis, people's lives change. Good teachers become bad teachers—not because they want to, but because of personal problems, because of things that face them. You have to work these problems out, not just hit people over the head and throw them by the wayside. Our teachers are too valuable to be thrown by the wayside, and we have to make every teacher in this state count, because there are not enough of them to go around. I don't want to come to Lubbock here and take teachers away from

Superintendent Leslie, and I don't want him to come to Brownsville and take my teachers away. One of the things that we have always feared in the Valley is that the giants would come in, offering great salaries to teachers to go teach in the big districts.

Last year, we fixed that. We got $24 million in Brownsville—additional monies. For us that was fantastic. But it doesn't cure all the ills. Far from it. Out of the $24 million (and I just had a bunch of the state legislators in Brownsville—because they were touring the Valley, and we wanted to be accountable for what we got), $16 million went into salaries; $4 million will be used this summer for free summer school to bring below-level students up to at least some kind of level. That's $20 million. One million dollars is earmarked to buy computers. That's $21 million. That leaves us $3 million to put in gifted and talented programs, innovative programs, counseling for drug abuse, try to buy buses, try to do the electrical stuff, try to maintain all of our schools. What about the 300 classrooms that I need, at $40,000 per classroom, that comes from this new house bill, $12 million more? What about the service that these classrooms (custodial service, electrical service, materials) need to maintain them? None of this is taken into consideration, and I can't go out into a community like Brownsville and tell my citizens that I am going to raise their taxes 20 cents when they have taken a beating like they have taken for the last three years with the devaluation of the peso from 27 to 1 to 250 to 1.

We have also experienced the closing of the biggest plant that we had in Brownsville—which was Union Carbide, 450 jobs, at better than $30,000 per job—gone and still closed. We also face the possible closing of Marathon LeTourneau, the second biggest oil rig company that we have, which has 400 employees and is planning to close next month. The freeze that hit the Valley ruined all of the citrus fruit, then drought hit the Valley (and that is why they call it the Tragic Valley). We have had everything hit us. It is just as if the Lord is saying, "Let's see how much you can take." But we are like Timex; we take a beating and we keep on ticking. I'll tell you that much.

With all of this, we still have a lot of things to offer. We have the most beautiful beach in the world on South Padre Island and Boca Chica. A few steps away is Matamoros, Mexico, one of the cleanest and most beautiful towns along the border. We have a beautiful community. Every day you walk out, you don't have to worry about smog or anything. The most beautiful attitude is that of the people in the Rio Grande Valley, and they are also the friendliest. We as superintendents in the Valley work together, from the largest to the

smallest, and we don't worry about who is large and who is small; we worry about what we can do to solve our problems. This is what makes us unique. And we like to work with other parts of the state. We go around to all of the parts of the state, because we are firm believers that we do not want to reinvent the wheel. If somebody has the wheel, we want to go copy it. We don't have time for reinvention. We've got to bring our children the most important facets of education that are available today.

One of the greatest things I have ever heard about teachers is that a good teacher is one who knows the way, shows the way, and goes the way. This is the teacher that takes students a long way. But the teacher who knows the way, but is very selfish about showing the way, and never goes the way is not going to help students in the future. Today, one of the good things we have going for us is that our teachers in our communities in South Texas are willing to go above and beyond, to go the extra mile. I know that we are monitoring our after-school tutorial systems. We as administrators are asking ourselves, "Can our teachers go an extra hour after they have put in the effort they have put in all day and try to give that extra hour, to those same children who are failures during the day, to try to make them successes in one hour after school?" We are monitoring this very closely. There is a lot of money involved. For the Brownsville School District, $5,000 per day is allocated for tutoring. We have to get our money's worth; it is very important. If the tutorials are not working, we are going to be the first to make noise, because that money can be used for other things.

Now what about this summer? One of the greatest things we could do this summer is to bring our children up from below grade level. But what do we face in the Valley, my fellow superintendents who are here and I? The fact is that parents have to go up north to eke out a living, and with them go these students—not by choice; they have to. These are the students who need this extra work. How do we meet the needs of these students? Do we go on Saturdays during the year? We have to look at all of the possibilities. Will there be enough teachers who are willing to work this summer? A lot of people criticize us as a profession, saying, "You all just work 183 days, you are not like the regular working person who has to work all year." But the work done in that 183 days takes so much out of teachers that they need some time off to recharge and get ready for the new year. [Applause.] One of my worries is that we need 700 teachers in Brownsville during the summer. When are these 700 people we need so badly going to recharge and get ready for

September 1? I worry about this because the body can take just so much. The mental capacity can take just so much, and there is no way right now to say we will use two shifts of teachers. There are not enough teachers to go around. This is someting that we are going to have to look at.

Will this hurt us next year? These people have to give above and beyond, all summer long, under conditions that are really hard to undergo. Although we have made an effort to air-condition some rooms at all of our elementary schools, we will not have every room air-conditioned this year; we have years to go on that. We have 32 elementary schools. In the first three years, we have totally air-conditioned eight; we will be working on three more this summer; and we are trying, as fast as possible, to get the rest air-conditioned. It is not a matter of saying, "Air-condition them all today." It is a matter of saying, "How do we pay the electrical bill tomorrow?" We have to budget for this.

One of the greatest things about school districts in the state of Texas is the fact that we can't work like the federal government. We have to be in the black; there is no such thing as deficit budgeting. So when we budget, we have to make sure that the money is there. When we as administrators sit in school district meetings and a board member says, "Let's give our teachers $200 for Christmas," and everybody thinks it's great, you know, then all of a sudden the administrators have this feeling that, well it is great, but where are we going to get the money? The board president turns and says, "You'll find the money; nothing to it." Somewhere, something that you had budgeted for has got to be cut out—whether it is a bus or whatever it may be so that this can be done. But so long as it is for the teachers, I think that this is something we have to promote, because if my job is easy today, and if any administrator's job is easy today, it is because the teachers are happy. If the teachers are not happy, we've got problems. So we have to make a maximum effort to make sure that our teachers are happy, so that they can do the job we expect for our students.

Now let's talk a little bit about the students coming in from Mexico. I have been criticized for years about being an alien fighter. Actually, I am not an alien fighter; I just want the means to be able to educate the aliens. I was very fortunate a few years ago to be invited by the Danforth Foundation to meet with 15 federal judges and eight superintendents from the United States and discuss issues and problems facing education in the country. Most of you have heard of Judge William Wayne Justice. He was one of the judges

there, and it was set up beautifully, because I was going to have to debate Judge Justice on the illegal alien problem and how it got up to the Supreme Court. Richard Cantú is here, and he has been one of my greatest fighters along with Tony García from Rio Grande, and we have been to Washington for eight years asking for funds to take care of the children coming from Mexico. We are getting children every day, who are totally illegal, coming into our district, requiring and requesting an education. The Supreme Court ruled against us and said, "You must educate everybody who lives in your district." Lives in your district; that is the key. So when we went to this meeting, Federal Judge Joe Gonzales from Florida was there and some of the judges were asking, "Why did this Supreme Court rule against you?" Judge Gonzales explained that he had read the writings of the Supreme Court, and the Supreme Court in a very wise way had said that they understood and realized that the federal government of this country could no longer maintain its borders. Isn't that a shame! We are worried about Ethiopia and Nicaragua and all these countries, and we can't take care of our own borders. They ruled that every child in this country would be educated, so that we would not end up with an illiterate society on welfare for the rest of our lives. It was very wise.

But with this in mind, we asked, "Why is it that our citizens and our community have to pay the price to educate these children who are coming in from a foreign country?" Now, let's face it. Brownsville, Texas and the Brownsville schools are 95 percent Hispanic. This year we had grown in our black population. We went from seven black students in the district to eight. I want you to know that we have over 25 black teachers in our district. Some of them have been with us for years. One of them, Jerry Jackson, one of my coaches, has been with us for 18 years. Jerry has never coached a black child in his life. He would not know what to do with one if he got one.

So to educate these children, we worked really hard with our local representatives and senators. There has been a bipartisan effort from Senator Tower and Senator Bentsen. They knew that we had a problem, but it has taken eight years for the federal government to recognize that there was a problem. All we wanted was one dollar, because once they gave us one dollar, they recognized that there was a problem.

This year, the Brownsville School District, after eight years of going up there—like that little red ant, we go up there and we bitch, and somebody says, "My God, there is that ant again." So finally somebody said, "Give them something, and see if they will go away."

And they did; they sent a lot of money through the education agency, and the education agency sent out all of the work, and the Brownsville School District received $517,000. It's a drop in the bucket for the 10,000 students we have who are from Mexico. But that $517,000 was immediately put to work to make 21 classrooms that are going to be used for computer education in the elementary schools. It is the first step toward going back and saying, "Now that we have this money, what are you going to do for us next year?" The little ant is not going to go away. As long as those kids keep coming, we don't expect the Texas Education Agency or the State of Texas to support all of this, or the local citizens.

When I started, I should have told you that our budget before Chapter 75 was $68 million. After Chapter 75, with our local construction money, we have $105 million for 32,000 students. Our budget this year is about $69 million in salaries. So we went from last year's budget, which was the total budget of the district, to a budget this year that has more money in salaries than all of last year's budget had for the whole district. All of this money went into our teaching ranks because we wanted to make sure that nobody in the state comes to Brownsville and steals our teachers. We want to make sure that we take care of them first. This year, we are going to increase salaries again. We are going to make it so nice in Brownsville that people will knock at our door to come teach in the greatest district in this state. [You all are laughing, aren't you? But I'll tell you what; I got your attention, didn't I?]

We'll take a backseat to no one in what we produce. To give an example right here, one of our ex-students is Norma Cantú, and we produce thousands like her. One of the things that we need a lot of help in, and that we must look at, is to find ways to meet the needs of all our children through special education, through vocational education, through bilingual education. We need these programs to take care of specific needs. I've often wondered if we are making a mistake, because the law says that we must put these children in regular classrooms to be able to make them function, and we cannot discriminate against children coming from Mexico. And being a zoology and chemistry major, I've often wondered if we could take our best school, with our best teachers, and bring the children in and find out what their real needs are and who can function and who can't—and centrifuge these until we get that residue that cannot function. And once we have this residue, then we can prescribe the vocational education needed to make these people functional in this world in the future. Not everybody is going to be a doctor, a lawyer,

a dentist, a technician, but there are many jobs that have to be done. A street sweeper in New York drives a sweeping maching and goes down one street from eight o'clock till three and gets $19,000 a year. And when this fact was brought to our attention, our teachers in Brownsville were getting $13,000, and they had gone to college four years. Right now, we are barely at the stage where the street sweeper is in New York. But they need that street sweeper. And that's why that person is getting $19,000. If we don't find people to collect our garbage, and people to do our plumbing and electrical work, and masonry work, these people are going to be making a lot more. And I'll share this story with you because Norma is a lawyer. The lawyer has a beautiful home, and on Sunday, a pipe breaks in the basement, and there's water flooding the basement. So he looks through the telephone book and finds a 24-hour, seven-day-a-week plumber. And he calls him. The plumber comes in and brings a little piece of PVC, puts it in there, puts on some glue, puts it back in, walks out, takes his bill, and gives it to the lawyer. The lawyer looks at it and says, "My God! Didn't you make a mistake?" "What do you mean?" "You haven't been here 15 minutes, and you're charging me $150." The plumber says, "That's my usual fee." He says, "Do you know who I am?" "No, I sure don't," the plumber replies. "I'm one of the best lawyers in this town, and my fee is only $100 per hour," the lawyer says. Then the plumber says, "Look man, when I used to be a lawyer, I charged the same thing."

The point I am trying to make is that there is a need for every person in every walk of life, and we cannot forget that we have to find an educational program to take care of these children in every walk of life, because if we are not all educated, then we are going to have a problem. Think of the astronaut who wants to go up in the rocket and be the first Hispanic in space. There is somebody at Cape Canaveral taking care of making sure that somebody puts the fuel in the rockets. There are not just the astronauts; there is a whole team of people there to make sure that rocket can take off.

In a school classroom, there is a certain custodian and a certain type of support person in maintenance, who make sure that your lights are working, that your heater does not go out in winter, that your air-conditioner is running properly, that your classroom is clean. There are administrators who make sure that a broken desk or chair is replaced. This is support staff. This is the staff that has been forgotten. This is the staff that makes it go. Can you imagine what it is (and I often wonder) for a teacher in Wyoming who has a single room school to go in in the morning and have to chop wood to start

the fire? Or have to clean their own classroom? I'm sure that if they have those single classroom units, they do not have custodians going around all over Wyoming cleaning classrooms. I don't think that there is a teacher in our district who has to worry about cleaning the room. They walk out in the afternoon and something is done about it. If something is needed or supplies are needed, they tell their principal.

Why are we doing all of this? Because this enables our teachers to dedicate full time to what we want them to dedicate time to—educating our children. Right now, one of the greatest things that has come down from the state level is the mandate to cut down on the paperwork. This is very very important to us, because it frustrates teachers when paperwork cuts into their teaching time. I'll never forget (and some of you may remember) the Fountain Valley System and the Wisconsin Design System. You go through systems all of the time; now we call it the Quality Brownsville Schools, and it used to be the Brownsville Education Plan. But, I'll never forget, because I went to observe a teacher in the classroom with the Fountain Valley System. She would teach kids, and all of a sudden, she'd stop. She would go to this little box and write it down; she would go to a chart and write it down. She would go to this piece of paper and write it down. She spent more time writing the results on all of these charts than she spent teaching the kids. I said, "There is something wrong with this system." We were very accountable, because you could find where the child was on any chart, but the child wasn't learning too much, because of the charts. So we have to forget about the charts, teach children, and lower the pupil-teacher ratio.

Twelve million dollars is a very small price to pay to educate children in a better environment where teachers can really work with them. I know what it is to have 46 students in a biology class. When I started in 1958, I had 46 students. Can you imagine going into a laboratory and having nine students with one microscope, and trying to go around the lab to see if they could see the hydra or amoeba. Today, we can have two to one microscope. Maybe a few years from now, we'll have a microscope for everybody. This is what we call the quality that we are looking for in education—when everybody will have the same opportunity to learn as everybody else in this country.

The thing we fight for more than anything else in the Valley and the border with Mexico is *not to be forgotten.* We are part of the state, you know; we are not our own country down there; we are part of the United States. And we love it. We love what we have. We are very grateful to the State Board of Education for appointing Dr. Bill Kirby Commissioner, because he knows our problems. He's been down

there. Every time Bill comes down there, we show him every problem there is. And all he does is shake his head. But he has been a friend. He knows that every time we go up there and we talk about our problem and our need, he will go out of his way to meet our needs, because he knows that we are not up there to bluff him. He's been there; he's been in our classrooms. He has seen our World War I barracks buildings.

Can you imagine, we still have one barracks in Brownsville that has square nails. It's a collector's item. And being that I am a collector, I want all of those nails taken out of it slowly. But that barracks, as old as it may be, so long as it is painted, so long as it is clean, so long as we can put an air-conditioner in it, is a good teaching situation. It is not the barracks or the portable, or the permanent building or the beautiful stained walls that make the teacher. It's the teacher that makes the room. I've walked into classrooms that are beautiful, brand new; and they are dull. There is nothing for kids to enjoy. And then I've walked into some where you say, "Hey, what teacher is in this room? This is beautiful." Everything is in order. They've got the little turkeys for Thanksgiving, they've got the alphabets. They've got the little trains. It's beautiful. Kids love that kind of an environment; we have to promote that as educators, as administrators.

You here are a good group, you've got a lot of leadership. I hope that you take what I am saying with a grain of salt; I never prepare a speech; I tell it to you the way it is. When I went to school, I never knew a word of English. My first grade teacher, Sister Eulalia, is still living and working somewhere in Houma, Louisiana. She is a Sister of the Holy Ghost. I never will forget how many times that I got hit on the hand because I didn't know when she asked me, "What is you name?" and I couldn't answer. But in my home, my grandmother didn't know English, so it was kind of a slap in the face if anybody ever spoke English in the home.

My father and mother did not make it through college. My father jumped out of the seventh grade window and said that he would never go back to school. But he had one advantage. Somebody, between first grade and sixth grade, showed him how to work percentages, and his whole life was, "What is the percentage involved." He did really well with that. His biggest worry was that he never had a degree. I bring this up because I used to tell him all of the time, "I will give you the degrees that I have for your experience." Somewhere along the line, we must remember that schools without experienced teachers and schools without

experienced administrators are going to have a lot of stumbling blocks. We ***must keep*** the experienced people we have, and today, we fear that a lot of our teachers are going to quit their profession because they are hurt, because they have been told that they have to be tested for a job that they have been doing successfully for 10, 20, 30 years. This is something that has to be corrected.

I don't think anybody would mind being tested; they know how to read and write. But I don't think that you have to go into details and scare people. The promotion that has been made and the press coverage have scared a lot of people into saying, "Before I have to take that stupid test, I am going to retire." And I say, "Why should the Brownsville School District lose quality teachers because of a law that our legislators made that they really did not look at?" Maybe there is time to save those teachers. I heard (I do not know how true it is) that today there are over 30,000 people who are asking for retirement papers, and the Teacher Retirement System is snowed under. Usually the average is 3,000. I don't know how true it is, but that is what they are saying.

If this is the case, we come back to that experience factor. Why are we losing all of this experience? What can we do to encourage these people to stay on? It's affecting me, as well. I'm saying that I need three years to get 30 years of service, and then I am going to do something else. Why should I leave the profession three years from now when I am really getting to a point in my life that I can really teach the pitfalls that I have been through to others? This is one of the things that we have to look at very seriously.

The other thing we have to look at that has been brought up is our young people coming into the profession and all of these preliminary tests. These are discouraging kids from going into the education profession. Where are we going to get our teachers for the future? Instead of discouraging, I think that we have to start at the sophomore level, not at the senior level as we do right now—the freshman and sophomore level—and start a campaign. We are doing it in Brownsville. We're saying, "Wait a minute, it's worthwhile being a teacher." We've got teachers right now who have had a lot of experience and are making $30,000 per year for 183 days; that ain't bad. We've got new teachers who are coming in and are going to start at $19-20,000, and that is not bad for 183 days. We have to promote this, so that our young children who are looking at the future don't just want to be lawyers, and dentists, and doctors, and architects, and so forth, but are going to look at the teaching profession as a profession with a future, one that will give them a good livelihood.

I told my children, "You may never get rich in education, but you will always have a good living." I guess they are doing pretty good, because out of six of them, I've got three who are going to be in education. Two are already in the field, and one is graduating in May. Somehow, we have done a good job with our kids, but we've got to promote teaching, so that more people go into education, so we can meet the standards that have been placed before us.

I want to tell you that I enjoy talking to groups like this, and I hope that what I have told you enlightens you a little bit about the problems we face. I could go on and go into a lot of details and a lot of specifics, but that is not the purpose of this meeting today. I will be glad to answer any questions.

When I was in high school (and I went to a small private Catholic high school in Brownsville, which is still there today) there were 11 in my senior class. One of the things we needed when we were graduating was a saying or a motto to live by for the rest of our lives (besides our colors and everything else). Our class is the only class in the history of St. Joseph's Academy that ever picked the one that goes like this: "If a work is once begun, never leave it until it is done. Be the work great or small, do it well or not at all." I have lived by this since the day I left my high school. One of the reasons that I am in education today is that we've begun the work, and we cannot leave it half done. There are a lot of young kids today who need the expertise and the experience of the people that are in it today. So I want to leave by saying, "The work is begun; we can't leave it until it is done." We have a long way to go before it is going to be done. So, I wish you well. I thank you for hearing me, and I thank Dr. Cavazos for allowing me to be here today. Thank you very much.

QUESTIONS

MODERATOR'S INTRODUCTION

Thank you very much Mr. Besteiro. I would like to suggest that if you hire any teachers through the alternative certification route, you put them in those un-air-conditioned classrooms.

It is appropriate that two of our main speakers are from Brownsville, because it seems that the problems they have to deal with exemplify all of the problems that all of us have to deal with in our school districts.

We are going to convert our speakers to a panel now, and this is your opportunity to ask follow-up questions on anything one of the speakers may have said that inspired a question on your part. We will also ask the speakers if they would like to react to any of the other speakers. Let's start with the audience and see whether anyone has a specific question.

Question

Mr. Besteiro, about your summer school—is it a free summer school? And is it for high school students only, junior high, or across the board? And how will you select students?

Mr. Besteiro

Anybody who is below grade level at the elementary level, or who has failed at the junior high school level, will be allowed to go to summer school free to make up that work. It is for all levels, from kindergarten through 12.

Question

My question is to Dr. Kirby and on aspects that Mr. Besteiro from Brownsville spoke about. We are from Robstown ISD, a community of 12,000. With respect to population, we have 4,500 kids in our schools from a population of 12,000. That gives you some figures to compare to Brownsville; so we share a common problem. House Bill 72 did a lot for us, Dr. Kirby, in equalization. It did not go far enough. As we added the numbers in terms of equalization, the loss of Chapter 1 and Chapter 1-Migrant funds, the cap, and the stress that was put on vocational funding, added to the criterion of the effective

tax rate in terms of keeping our tax rate down to a minimum meant not having flexibility.

We put most of our money, as Mr. Besteiro did, into salaries. All the studies show that the funding level is not sufficient. We know in our community that being well off is not the answer to everything. In fact, House Bill 72 for our district was not too new to us. We established a passing grade of 70 two years ago. We also said to our community, and the board supported it, that if you wanted to play in athletics or band, you could not fail as many subjects as were allowed in other school districts, and we cut back.

Funding is so important for us, because we do not have the industry that most successful tax districts have. Equalization hasn't gone far enough and we are faced with the loss of federal dollars, not only from the education standpoint but from the city standpoint in terms of economic development grants and revenue sharing.

What kind of support can we expect to continue the educational funding in terms of equalization? All that we want is to have the same microscopes that neighboring school districts have, the airconditioning, and to pay our bills. What kind of commitment can we expect from the agency, from you as new commissioner, in terms of equalization and serving the needs of the Hispanic child?

Dr. Kirby

I think that the remarks I made to you earlier spoke to a new beginning. I think that you aptly pointed out that the problems you've laid out show clearly that it is only a beginning.

I am, in fact, very concerned about funding for the future. The oil price in Texas is a critical factor; every time it goes down $1.00 per barrel, we lose some $40 million in direct state revenue. There are those that say it extends on out and ultimately affects the economy, perhaps by as much as $100 million per dollar that we lose. The forecast for the future is not good, because there are those that say the oil price is likely to go as low as $20 a barrel. So the state revenue situation, in fact, looks dismal at best. When House Bill 72 started out under the Select Committee recommendation, the base funding allotment was $1850. Because of the cost of that level program, it was reduced to $1350. We have recently completed, through the State Board of Education, a study by the Accountable Costs Committee recommending new weights. Those new weights, in looking at what it is actually costing out there, say that it is actually costing a base of $2000, not $1350.

Right now, the legislature is not, in fact, looking at any additional funding over the next two years. The thing that we are gratified for is that they are looking at continuing the additional funding they have provided in House Bill 72. So we do believe that the original projection will continue, and we do believe that poor school districts will continue to receive additional dollars during this next biennium as a result of equity and as a result of changing local fund assignment increases.

Those gains will not be nearly as dramatic as the recent gains that we experienced. There was a one-year dramatic gain. But during the next couple of years there will be lesser gains.

In addition, at the same time as those districts that are property poor districts are gaining, other districts are going to be losing. So we are going to have a tremendous burden statewide, both in poor and rich districts, with the burden continuing to fall more and more on local property taxpayers, and we are going to approach the point in the near future when those taxpayers are going to be resisting. They are going to begin to say, "No, we are not going above 8 percent any more." They have the authority now in state law to roll back any increases above 8 percent.

So the economic conditions at this point in time look as though we will continue the gains made under House Bill 72 for the next biennium, but it is the next biennium after that and the next biennium that I have concerns about. In this state, we will have a million more kids to educate by the year 2000. The vast majority of those children will be Hispanic children, and many of those Hispanic children will be limited English proficient. The children we do least well with will be the majority population.

So we are absolutely going to have to do more then we have been doing. It is going to take more and more financial resources.

We got our report card from the Secretary of Education. We were forty-fifth, based on the scores, and if we had a no-pass, no-play rule for states, we wouldn't be playing. Our report card was not good. There are those who would suggest that we adjust the scores because of the percentage of minorities and because of the percentage of low-income families, and because of the percentage of women, and some researchers at Harvard did that for us. They adjusted the scores and we were forty-eighth after the adjustment. So in achievement, we are at the bottom. We believe that under House Bill 72, we can make significant progress, but it is just a new beginning, only a beginning. What we have got to do is involve Texas and involve Texans, and that is why it is going to take a cooperative partnership between all of

the people in this state—business and industry, taxpayers, mothers and dads, those over 65. It is going to take *everybody* working together to see the need. The one thing that they found out in that study (when they adjusted the scores and looked at our report card) is that there was a direct correlation between the amount of money spent on education per student and the kinds of gains that students were achieving. We were spending little, and we were producing little. Now we are going to be spending more, but the question is, Are we spending *enough* more? And with all of our special needs, we are clearly going to have to look at additional resources.

You were very accurate in pointing out that we have made some gains, but that we need to make additional ones. Everyone must understand the tremendous investment an education requires—that it costs a lot of money, but it will pay dividends for this state. Yes, we have made a good beginning, but we have got to go much further.

Question

I would like to direct my question to Norma Cantú in regard to competency testing. You mentioned there were going to be some lawsuits filed. Would you expand on that just a little bit?

Norma Cantú

My statement was that there will be lawsuits filed if there are no changes. What we perceive to be occurring in this state is that 90 percent of black students in college who take the P-PST, the Pre-Professional Skills [competency] Test, fail it; they don't pass all three sections. Something on the order of 80 percent of the Hispanics fail it, and white students aren't passing it in great numbers, either. There are two things going on. First, either the test is valid and we have a very serious problem in this state in that we are not preparing our teacher candidates very well—including whites. If that is the case, then there are going to be some lawsuits, because we need to do a better job of preparing our teacher candidates. The other possibility is that the test is invalid, and we won't accept the proposition that 90 percent of the black students just aren't able to become teachers.

Those two possibilities are occurring. One of the factors that I am really pushing for is that the P-PST is much, much too narrow. It looks only at the minimum competencies. It does not take into account the ability to communicate those competencies in a classroom. You are going to find people off the street who have never been trained as teachers and have no teaching experience, who can

pass the P-PST. Those may be the people we are going to be putting into our classrooms. And I am not happy with that.

So, if you want to expand on what is going on, we are looking at true measures. We are looking for the state to adopt true measures of ***real competencies*** that are necessary for the classroom.

Question

I'm going to ask a sort of stupid question here that came up when she asked her question. After listening to the superintendent, it appeared to me that he didn't believe that these competency tests were adequate. And I'm sure that is what we are talking about. But, I also got a little bit of a hint from him that the competency tests may not be adequate *ever*. I was just wondering. Do you have any other method proposed by which we can accomplish the same purpose, meaning weeding out the persons who need to be weeded out (that is assuming that we have them)? If there are such ways, perhaps our legislators are waiting to hear your answer. And perhaps we can have an exception for those teachers who have been teaching for 15 to 30 years, a way to leave them in the system? Do you have an answer?

Mr. Besteiro

Certainly. First of all, I don't think that the legislators are willing to hear my solution because they weren't willing to hear my proposal when it first started. They did not ask anybody about the competencies, so they are not worried about that.

All I am trying to say is that if this is a law, and we have to go through with it, then we have to look at a ***minimum*** skill, so that not all of our teachers are going to pay the price because of a few. Now, as far as weeding out, as you have said, this is a job of good administrators. Today we are still weeding out and removing teachers who have to be removed because they are not meeting the needs and are not the type of teacher that is supposed to teach our children. That has always been our job. I don't think competencies are going to come in and do anything different.

You also have to remember one thing—that with all of this, whether it is competencies or anything else, there is a political side to it. We as administrators have to be very careful, when we walk on those eggshells, trying to weed our people that maybe some of our boards or some of our community members think are great people, while we feel that they are not the people we need in the classrooms.

This is something that is very touchy. But I'm not saying that the competencies are not important; I'm saying that if they have to be met by law, then they have to be put into a perspective, and that we just test what they are supposed to do (that is, reading and writing) and not try to go into definite areas and specific areas. For example, if they are going to check me on my competency for teaching biology and chemistry, and I have not taught biology and chemistry for 21 years, I need time to go back and bone up on them to see if I can still do a good job. And I think that I can if I'm given the chance.

We in Brownsville have set aside a large sum of money to bring in people to give our teachers some of the competencies that they need to be refreshed on, not that they are not worthy already, but so they will feel more relaxed if they have to go in and take this test. We are waiting, and we need to know what is going to happen. But we have made this commitment: that we are going to bring in college staffs, whatever it takes to bone up our people so they won't feel that they are going into a test without any kind of research and preparation. I think you will realize that when you went to college, that was one of the things you looked forward to the night before a test—if you could sit with somebody or if you could study with another student, you could feel comfortable that you were not going into there "cold turkey" to face something that may make a difference in the rest of your life.

I feel that we as administrators *are* doing our job, and our job is to weed out the people who have no business in education; that is why we are administrators. But since this has been done as a mandate, and we have to live with it, I just feel that we have to look at it in such a way that we are not going to destroy our professional and veteran teachers, and make them quit, because they are teed off because somebody said that they had to be tested.

Moderator

Dr. Kirby would also like to respond to that.

Dr. Kirby

I'd like to clarify for everyone exactly what we are going to do with respect to the competency testing, because if nothing else, when you go back to your communities, I think that you can help calm folks down. The biggest fear is the fear of the unknown. It is the uncertainty of not knowing what is going to happen. What the State Board of Education has recommended (and our plans are underway; in fact, I'll be signing a contract within the next few days to carry this

out), what the Senate has already passed, what the Senate Finance Committee agreed to Sunday, and what the House Appropriations Committee has already agreed to, is one and the same. That is, we will test every educator in Texas in reading and writing. Period. Reading and writing. Every educator who can read and write has absolutely nothing to fear, but we are going to have a competency test to see that those people who are working as educators can read and write.

One of the things that we have got to do is to get the word out to all of the school people and get the word out to the teachers to sit still, and be easy and relaxed. The test is just that. It is going to be a test to see if you can read and write. If you have those basic skills, you have absolutely nothing to fear. We are going to be putting out materials, Raul, early in the fall, so that the teachers can see the kind of test that it is going to be. We are going to give them examples of the way that it will look and the instructions that they will follow. I think that all of the good teachers in this state (and no one was ever concerned about more than a very small, tiny percentage) will have no problems.

Now in addition to that, another thing that has been put into place is an appraisal system. It fits into exactly what Raul Besteiro was talking about. That is, the administrators, principals, and supervisors will be involved in the process of appraising each teacher twice per year. The state is going to develop a standard appraisal instrument and a standard training system. The State Board will be approving this. And we will be training every person in the state, and in fact certifying everybody who is going to be an appraiser, so we know that they are qualified and can recognize good teaching and ineffective teaching.

The appraisal will be done by two people. So teachers are going to get four looks per year. The purpose of that is to find any teachers with weaknesses and provide additional assistance and retraining. So what we are going to do is to take the teachers we have and make all of those teachers better. I think that when everyone understands this, they will be much more supportive and much more relaxed. I believe it will improve education in this state.

Question

This question is directed to Dr. Kirby. I agree with many of the individuals who have stated that money is needed, and money is indeed crucial to provide quality programs to Hispanic students. Some of the districts represented here today are among the wealthiest

in the state, yet Hispanic achievement in these school districts is still far below the state and national averages. I would like to know what direction the TEA will take, or has taken, or may take in the future, in regard to assisting school districts in identifying the type of programs that do work, what type of programs that can be implemented to increase the achievement of the students.

Dr. Kirby

You are talking my language now. Let me tell you one of the things that I recommended as Interim Commissioner to the State Board of Education. They agreed wholeheartedly with it and are now supporting very strongly some specific appropriation requests to address exactly what you are talking about. I am delighted to tell you that I was before the Senate Finance Committee yesterday, and they went along with the idea. So we have some hope for the Appropriation Conference Committee process.

We asked for $2 million per year for research and development. It is sad indeed that we have now begun to spend millions and millions of additional dollars, and yet we are not sure exactly what works and what doesn't. One of the things that we think the state needs to do, and provided that we receive the appropriation, we are going to do, is to get out and find out those kinds of programs that are working, what is working and what is not, and then through the State Board of Education rule-making process, as we disseminate and as we identify the programs that work, mandate that the schools spend the money for the kinds of things that do work.

Yet one of the things that we have to do again goes back to what Mr. Besteiro said. It has to be done at a campus level. What works in one school won't work in another. So what we propose to do is to identify a whole cadre of programs that have been proven to be effective—what are the characteristics of those successful programs—and to say to school districts, "You pick and choose. You have the flexibility, but you are going to have to take something that is successful. If you have your own idea, then come front and center with your own idea, and for a year, we will let you spend some of the $319 million of State Comp-Ed money to run your own program, but you are going to have to have a research design tied to it, and if you don't get the results, next year you are going to have to do something different."

So that is one of the things that we are going to do. The other thing is that we have asked for $4 million per year for contract funds, and the Senate gave us those funds last night, and this is to work

through contracting with education service centers for curriculum development. Schools are going to need a great deal of help as we implement House Bill 246, *Chapter 75, TAC* and its essential elements.

Training is another area. We have vast new training programs for teachers, administrators, for all educational personnel. That is another area we are going to have, training.

Accreditation is another area. We have completely shifted the direction of accreditation in House Bill 72. We are not going to be out looking nearly as much at leaky plumbing and at paper on the playground. We are going to look at special programs and the results of the special programs. Are we getting achievement? If we are not getting student learning, then we are going to be insisting that programs be adjusted. So the point that you made is very valid, and the state needs to take a very definite leadership role in providing school districts examples and models of what will work.

We will be working very carefully with school districts. What good does it do for us to come out and see that schools are doing everything by the book and following all of the rules and regulations (which has been our focus for 20 years, since I've been there) if it is not resulting in achievement? The new beginning, the new direction, is what is happening with kids. That is what House Bill 72 was all about, to get our focus away from the process, if you will, and to get our focus on the product, what is happening to kids.

Question [Lucy Gutiérrez]

One of the things that concerns me is that we set up programs like the four-year-old programs, and yet we are not requiring those people to be bilingual when we are saying that the system will be contingent. The four year olds that we are concerned about come from our same community. Yet somewhere along the way, three years later, we are going to spend $2 million more to say, "What didn't go right?", when that should be our concern right now. We shouldn't have to worry about that two or three years later.

Another thing that concerns me is that in setting up the essential elements in *Chapter 75, TAC*, we have to identify what is going to happen to the LEP population with a tiny little asterisk at the bottom that says, "For the students that require native language instruction." I don't feel that our purposes are being represented in that sense, because we need the backing from you. We look for direction from you. And we will do that. But we don't want to wait three years later and say, "What went wrong? What is the meaning of this backtrack?"

And we really don't need to be forgotten when laws are being made or when those policies are being enacted. We need for you to take our LEP population and work with them where we are right now.

We are looking at textbooks right now. I was so excited last year when we went through textbook adoption, and we had quality books to look at. I went home, and every night I went to those books, and I thought my native language speakers were going to get quality material. But we don't have them in reading yet. Fortunately, next year we are going to have them in mathematics. I work with beautiful bilingual teachers, but I'm always saying to them, "You have done so much more than every other teacher in the state, because you're providing the language that somebody is forgetting out there. And you hear about what's going wrong. But you teachers are the best teachers in the state, and you're trying to provide for our kids." We need a break from the Texas Education Agency. [Applause].

Dr. Kirby

Absolutely. I would agree with you, and one of the things we are going to be doing at TEA is launching a recruitment program to try to bring some minority individuals into levels of midmanagement at the agency. This can help give some direction and provide some participation in those decisions.

As for the four-year-old program, we are very much in the same kind of dilemma the legislature was in when they passed House Bill 72. They had a choice to pass HB 72, and to give an immediate teacher salary raise, and to start the career ladder without the appraisals, or to wait. They felt they simply could not wait, and so we should move ahead with the career ladder, because the teachers needed the money, even though we didn't have everything in place to do it exactly the way we would like to have done.

That's where we are in the four-year-old program. The question is, Do we wait until we have enough completely well trained and certified bilingual teachers? The future in that area is very bad right now. We've absolutely got to do much more to get qualified individuals in. And the very problem Norma is talking to you about is that our P-PST is keeping many minorities from being able to get in to the teacher education programs. We've been working this past week both with MALDEF and senator Truan in terms of some language and some bills that we think could help with that. So we are working to take a new look. In fact, we've talked with the Educational Testing Service, and they've agreed to go back and work with us and work with the State Board in completely looking at the P-PST.

Senator Truan's bill would not only say look at the testing and consider even the possibility of developing a new test. It also says that if the problem is not the test, then we've got to do something to make sure that the people taking the test have been given the opportunity to learn. And so it's going to be attacked from both fronts.

The four-year-old program is something that simply can't wait. We are talking about having the board allow people that are certified bilingual, that are certified early childhood, that are certified elementary, to staff those programs in order to get them underway. We certainly would hope that we would have a widespread use of volunteers and parents. But we've clearly said in our four-year-old programs that for school districts that are going to have children in bilingual education programs, that it makes absolutely no sense to take a child in as a four-year-old, and have that child in an English curriculum; then they get to kindergarten next year, and it's bilingual. So the board, through the rule making process, is looking at continuity. And I would say to you, again, we are only talking; we are beginning. It's just a beginning. And we need a great deal of help and a great deal of input from those of you out in the field to help make this work, to make it successful.

The answers don't come from TEA down. The answers must bubble up from the people in the field. And so the TEA and the State Board, as they get these answers and as they get proposed solutions, can in fact then adopt into policy those things that will work. We don't have the answers; we believe you do. We believe that you can help give them to us. We would be delighted to work with you. That's why I'm here today, to get input, to receive. One of the things we are going to try to be doing is to open up the process. In fact, before we take any rule to the Board of Education now, we run it by all the various organizations to see that they have input and that they give suggestions before we ever take it to the board. So we are trying to be open and receptive, and any ideas you have about how we can be more open will be considered seriously.

Question

I just want to make one point here, and it's in the same area that Dr. Kirby just addressed and the Director of Bilingual Education from Lubbock just addressed, and that is that a lot of things do not cost money. For instance, take our resources here in this room. All of us are very knowledgeable in a lot of educational areas, and can be pulled into TEA for some of that input you were asking for. I mean

when directors of reading go down to Austin to help, or the people at TEA come help to set up and develop the essential elements for *Chapter 75*, and give guidance on preschool education, it is very important that we get pulled in there at the same time, so that when regulations and laws come out, we have some representation. It is essential that we have answers before we come up with problems. And I just want to say right here from all of us, "Pull us in; we're there. We will help."

Dean Ishler

Thank you. We hate to bring this to a close because we're just really getting into it, but in order to keep on schedule, we do need to go to lunch.

GROUP REPORTS FROM COMMUNITY TEAMS: ISSUES/PROBLEMS IDENTIFIED AND PLANS FOR THE FUTURE

Following are summary reports from all the teams that turned in group reports following the Team Report Forum on the afternoon of April 22, 1985. Groups are listed below in alphabetical order by city. It should be noted, however, that several groups included persons from towns and school districts other than the one(s) named in the title, especially when there were very few representatives of a locality.

ABILENE

Issues/Problems/Priorities Addressed

1. Lack of community "spirit" or culture in Abilene for Hispanics
2. Lack of involvement in political activity and advocacy regarding Hispanic issues (the attitude of the Hispanic community)
3. Lack of Hispanic role models in the community (public officials, counselors, administrators)
4. Dropouts: how to retain Hispanic students in school
5. Poverty among Hispanics
6. Lack of extracurricular activity incentives for Hispanics to stay in school
7. Small number of Hispanic educators desiring administrative positions
8. Language-related problems
   a. Lack of bilingual educators
   b. Parents' lack of language skills and related reluctance to participate in meetings conducted in English

Plans/Suggestions for Addressing Issues Identified

1. Emphasize training in cultural awareness (mandatory) for school district personnel's staff development
2. Coordinate study of Hispanic educational issues—especially dropouts—by school of districts and institutions of higher education
3. Secure involvement of Hispanic city personnel in career education

4. Explore validity of above-listed issues within the Hispanic community
5. Expand the involvement of the planning team through continued meetings; get additional committee membership from the Hispanic community

AMARILLO

Issues/Problems/Priorities Addressed

1. Potential economic impact on Amarillo of population boom, population shifts, and dropouts
2. Need for parental educational sessions to increase understanding of learning
3. Need for role models and improved community awareness

Plans/Suggestions for Addressed Issues Identified Above

1. School Programs
   a. Have bilingual interpreters for all levels of communication
   b. Use local educational TV and radio presentations
   c. Identify more accurately the local dropout populations
   d. Redesign and implement bilingual Headstart-like programs for ages 4-6
2. School-Community Programs
   a. Start *barrio* study halls
   b. Hold parental seminars financed and conducted by school/community resource people
   c. Make concerted efforts to publicize needs, rights, and positive benefits of minority communities
   d. Encourage extended involvement in Adopt a School program
   e. Do *much* more local planning for identifying Hispanic issues before implementing any strategies

BIG SPRING

Issues/Problems/Priorities Addressed

1. For Howard College, the primary problem areas are recruitment and retention of Hispanics
2. For Big Spring Independent School District, a serious problem is an "attitude toward education" situation

3. Many of educational problems are clearly economic problems rather than ethnic problems
4. Weaknesses in self-concept should be addressed

Plans/Suggestions for Addressing Issues Identified

1. Identify dropouts, ask them "Why," and try to provide what is needed to alleviate distractors
2. Try door-to-door recruitment in bilingual areas; take bilingual person along on all visits
3. New "by place" elections of school board should increase Hispanic participation
4. Parental participation in adult education programs can improve attitudes
5. If education is the answer, education must be inviting, welcoming, and comfortable
6. Besides door-to-door recruiting, efforts must be made to reach out to dropouts
7. Identify instructional programs that would entice "dropouts" to return to education; for instance, adult basic education, continuing education, developmental classes, and vocational programs
8. Provide minority professionals to fill counseling, teaching, and administrative positions and serve as role models
9. Identify language and reading problems *early* and begin remediation
10. Advertise and provide career counseling for public school dropouts

BROWNSVILLE

Issues/Problems/Priorities Addressed

1. Remedy the need for certified bilingual education teachers—Hispanic teachers
2. Encourage Hispanics to enroll in both academic and technical postsecondary education
3. Meet the need for pre-kindergarten programs and parent training
4. Address the dropout problem

Plans/Suggestions for Addressing Issues Identified Above

1. Provide incentives for bilingual education teachers at state level
2. Provide scholarships or programs to retrain teachers for bilingual education

3. Develop alternatives for PPST
4. Provide financial resources for needy students
5. Provide remedial courses for students to be able to succeed in college
6. Provide counseling
7. Develop programs to meet the needs
8. Provide funds for construction of classrooms
9. Provide alternative programs such as GED (General Educational Development) Test programs, remedial courses, partnerships

BRYAN / COLLEGE STATION

Issues / Problems / Priorities Addressed

1. Lack of demographic data related to Hispanics in Brazos County
   a. Percentage of Hispanics in Brazos County
   b. School dropout rate of Hispanics
   c. Success rate of Hispanics
   d. Percentage of faculty that is Hispanic
   e. Percentage of Hispanic-owned businesses
   f. Other related data
2. Lack of success in attracting Hispanics into college
3. Need for additional (different / alternatives) educational delivery system (community college)
4. No mass transit

Plans / Suggestions for Addressing Issues Identified

1. Have a planning breakfast for organizing a Brazos County Symposium during the next four months
2. Conduct a local symposium based on the Texas Tech model within the next six months
3. Videotape symposium proceedings to broadcast to the broader community
4. Identify local issues relating to Hispanics that are peculiar to Brazos County
5. Formulate an action strategy based on local symposium findings
6. Report local success at second annual symposium at Texas Tech

CANYON

Issues / Problems / Priorities Addressed

1. Communication with Hispanic families (language / culture)
2. Recruitment of Hispanic students
3. Retention of Hispanic students
4. Attitudes toward education
5. Parental involvement
6. Shortage of Hispanic teachers

Plans / Suggestions for Addressing Issues Identified

1. Create awareness of the need for persons of Hispanic culture in every school (K-12)
2. Have multicultural inservice programs to sensitize incumbent teachers
3. Sensitize West Texas State University's College of Education to multicultural needs
4. Improve recruitment of Hispanics at West Texas State University—students and employees. (There is already one Hispanic recruiter and one Upward Bound program on campus)
5. Improve retention at West Texas State—special services, such as, PASS program for students having low ACT scores

DALLAS

Issues / Problems / Priorities Addressed

1. Dropout rate
2. No significant longitudinal studies being conducted by the district

Plans / Suggestions for Addressing Issues Identified

The study must include but not be limited to the following procedures:

1. Develop a district definition of dropout and retention rates to include checkpoints such as fourth, seventh, ninth, twelfth grades and some postgraduation data
2. Study / develop list of what statistics the Research and Evaluation Department have available; what research capabilities exist in this area

3. Develop a profile of the potential dropout using demographics considering sex, age, grade level, and achievement information, by area, school, and ethnicity
4. Identify and utilize available literature/studies as to a possible design. Study findings, recommendations, conclusions
5. Develop and administer a questionnaire and interview form for recent dropouts: students, parents, and teachers of these students
6. Select the sample of students to be included in the study
7. Analyze the differences between Hispanic students who drop out and those who remain in school
8. Identify the factors that contribute to dropout rate and those that impact dropouts at various checkpoints or specific grade levels
9. Tie these dropout rate factors into the counseling program and other special services district may or may not be providing
10. Describe and incorporate data and recommendations on dropout rates for those sampled students into the district's School Improvement Plan (SIP)
11. Develop a retention program
12. Develop a timeline to implement this plan

ECTOR COUNTY

Issues/Problems/Priorities Addressed

1. Lack of parental involvement
2. Retention
3. Resources—are they used equitably within the district?
5. Drug problem

Plans/Suggestions for Addressing Issues Identified

1. Propose "board watching" concept
2. Get access to data related to dropout/achievement rates
3. Urge the School Board to finance programs aimed at improving retention
4. Continue to ask the board to balance the burden of integration between minority and majority communities
5. Encourage the district to admit problem; encourage strict drug policy

EL PASO

Issues/Problems/Priorities Addressed

1. Attitudes toward education
2. Attitudes within the individual, family, community, teachers, administrators

Plans/Suggestions for Addressing Issues Identified

1. Establishment of learning skills workshops for parents (come and learn what you can do with your child)
2. Staff development to change attitudes (work toward creating a positive and sensitive attitude toward students; administrators are to be included in the training)
3. Tie both of these suggestions in with good, responsible, and informed publicity. Work toward better public awareness (marketing)
4. Make efforts to place an El Pasoan on boards of regents at the University of Texas at Austin and Texas Tech, preferably a Hispanic
5. See that El Paso team members meet with representatives from El Paso who were unable to attend and with other leaders. The purpose of that meeting would be to inform of the Symposium and the recommendations of members present

KINGSVILLE

Issues/Problems/Priorities Addressed

1. Attitudes toward education: within the individual, the family, the community
2. Value placed on education

Plans/Suggestions for Addressing Issues Identified

1. Adopt a plan whereby college students would work individually with potential dropouts
2. Try an incentive plan for workers whose children graduate or who themselves improve their education
3. Use the media to promote staying in school
4. Involve the churches

LEVELLAND

Issues/Problems/Priorities Addressed

1. Parent involvement
2. Parent training
3. Student self-concept and attitudes
4. Community coordination of activities and services

Plans/Suggestions for Addressing Issues Identified

1. A task force to focus on issues
2. Volunteer leadership
3. PTA involvement in parent education
4. Coordination with the intervention team—self-concept
5. Obtain student input/survey
6. Media coverage for all programs within districts—honor rolls, radio, TV programs

MIDLAND

Issues/Problems/Priorities Addressed

1. Lack of cooperation from MISD (Midland Independent School District) toward Hispanic issues
2. Attitudes toward education (within the individual); lack of motivation (starting early in elementary—fourth grade)
3. High absenteeism rate and withdrawal of Hispanic students

Plans/Suggestions for Addressing Issues Identified

1. Form a group—invite all minority groups, organizations, and interested parents to form a committee to work with MISD
2. Have aggressive recruitment of Hispanic teachers, counselors, and administrators
3. Identify problem schools
   a. Adopt a school program concept (in conjunction with campus PTAs)
   b. Hire bilingual attendance clerks
   c. Hire a bilingual attendance officer
   d. Use a telephone bank to inform parents whom attendance clerks could not reach and encourage school attendance

PECOS

Issues/Problems/Priorities Addressed

1. Increase parent involvement (this group discussed many issues and decided to focus on one that could be handled with the resources available)
2. Retention rate

Plans/Suggestions for Addressing Issues Identified

1. Work with church groups to increase parent involvement
2. Utilize UTSA parent training packages to build knowledge, interest and skills
3. Implement nontraditional PTA meetings which create authentic involvement of Hispanic parents
4. Board watching
5. Community leadership program to express need to educate parents first about issues and problems

RAYMONDVILLE

Issues/Problems/Priorities Addressed

1. Dropout/truancy problem
2. Parental involvement
3. Better communication system

Plans/Suggestions for Addressing Issues Identified

1. Develop plan to prevent dropouts:
   a. Exit conference (parent required to be present, counseling, committee of outside resource people, and other means to encourage/allow students to stay in school)
   b. School and public officials meeting regularly to plan for dealing with dropout/truancy problems
2. Parental involvement through town meeting and perhaps block representatives

ROBSTOWN, RIO GRANDE CITY, LUBBOCK, AND TEXAS TECH UNIVERSITY

Issues/Problems/Priorities Addressed

1. Education for positive attitudes in training for teachers in IHEs
2. Different groups to deal with teachers in public schools to work with culturally and linguistically diverse children
3. Curricular needs that are individual campus needs
4. Mismatch of curriculum and needs of students; compatability of language and culture with curriculum
5. Parental involvement
6. Lack of media involvement
7. Education of school boards and principals

Plans/Suggestions for Addressing Issues Identified

1. Inclusion of program requirements for *all* teachers in bachelor's degree programs
2. Staff development
   a. To work with teacher attitudes toward language and culture
   b. To teach teachers to work with parents
   c. To teach teachers how to teach "I care" attitudes
3. Flexibility for each campus
4. Good program implementation for each campus
5. Addressing parents in their native language; PTA for just this purpose
6. Adult education for basic reading and mathematics
7. Pay for peer tutoring by older to younger students
8. Give parents something useful to do and expect them to do it
9. Develop improved system of communicating with students, parents, community

SAN ANTONIO

Issues/Problems/Priorities Addressed

1. Attitude of family—enrollment in kindergarten programs
2. Dropout rate
3. Recruitment of teachers/teacher shortage
4. Parental involvement
5. Attitude toward education; family, individual, community
6. Number of Hispanics in higher education institutions

7. Business involvement in this problem; small number of minorities in professional categories
8. Lack of trust in white administration and board
9. Counseling of high school students—higher expectations

Plans/Suggestions for Addressing Issues Identified

1. Advertising in English and Spanish newspapers, by radio announcements, and in church bulletins
2. Stressing the long-term value of education versus short-term dollar value
3. Do something about the apparent need for R and D departments in ISDs
4. Develop a more "caring" environment in school; the school needs to value Hispanic culture
5. Community awareness programs and business involvement in education
6. Greater effort in recruitment, loans, and student aid
7. Have a Hispanic on school board for a closer working relationship
9. Hispanic community needs to provide support to students; better counseling for higher aspirations

SAN MARCOS

Issues/Problems/Priorities Addressed

1. Family economics, which impact on dropout rate
2. Meeting basic needs (nutrition, shelter, health care)

Plans/Suggestions for Addressing Issues Identified

1. Organize a communication system to include: legislative official—representative/senator, director of community action, school superintendent, civic representative (city council person), school board representative, social program director, university representative
2. Work toward promoting a system designed to keep the students in school

WICHITA FALLS

Issues/Problems/Priorities Addressed

1. School Board membership—no minority representative
2. Midwestern State University Board of Regents—no minority representative
3. Lack of attendance and retention—public schools and Midwestern State University
4. Shortage of community role models—Bob Estrada, Febe García, Delfina Martínez, Louis Esquibel
5. Lack of defined support group

Plans/Suggestions for Addressing Issues Identified

1. Awareness program—more publicity for Hispanic community endeavors
2. Letters to the editor

OTHER GROUP REPORTS

Issues/Problems/Priorities Addressed

1. District school improvement plans neither incorporate nor address the needs of LEP students
2. Because of new attendance policies, there has been denial of course credit for nonacademic reasons
3. Too few Hispanics are preparing for scientific and engineering careers

Plans/Suggestions for Addressing Issues Identified

1. Include LEP student achievement in school improvement plans, those monitored by the Texas Education Agency
   a. Include achievement test in Spanish: both norm-referenced tests and language assessment instruments
   b. Report the number of ESL (English as a Second Language) and bilingual education teachers in order to identify gaps in program continuity and to recruit the number of needed teachers
2. Conduct a study to analyze the number of Hispanic students denied course credit due to new attendance policies; use this information to reduce dropout/attrition rate

CONCLUDING REMARKS

Lauro F. Cavazos

First, I want to thank all of you. Many of our colleagues have had to leave because of bus schedules and plane schedules and everything else, but you have come a long way to address very, very difficult issues. That you took your time to do this, I greatly appreciate; our university appreciates it. I am particularly pleased that we had so many students and faculty members from Tech here. The students are the ones who in the future will be implementing the changes you discussed today.

Now I have been asked a number of times today, "Why Texas Tech? Why did you people do this? Bring us together in a rather unique situation?" Frankly, I do not know of another conference or symposium quite like this one that has addressed this issue—certainly in the state of Texas, and perhaps nationwide. One of the major chores of a university, in addition to the serious work of education and research, is that of public service: that is, calling attention to a series of issues, problems, and opportunities. In that respect, I think that we have done our job. The idea was to bring together community leaders, let them work with the issues, fire up their enthusiasm, then have them go back and stir up their colleagues and friends and others in the communities that they return to, so that we continue to address the issues. I talked about these same issues in Washington, fussed about them a little bit in Austin, talked to a lot of people, anybody I could corner somewhere who will listen to me. I have heard more good ideas here, from the summary statements and from our other two speakers, than I have heard in a long, long time. The talent is out there to solve what some people call a *problem*. I like to look at it as an *opportunity*. I'd like to look at it as an opportunity really to change the face of America—into a nation that is educated, that can deal with issues and move ahead. It's a great time to live in American today! We can look at it not as problems (I stated many of them), but as an *opportunity* to take the masses of bright, bright people, coming in here, and turn them around, and really bring something about that will move us ahead.

I pledge, certainly, the support of our own university to try to resolve these issues. I hope you will call on us as resource people as we call on you. There is a lot of talent at Texas Tech. We have

a lot of talent in our universities throughout Texas. Turn to your local university, turn to those people out there, turn to us and say, "We need direction, or ideas, or planning," and I am convinced that we can move forward.

I hope that you will address very very strongly the issue of where our future Hispanic teachers will come from and where our future Hispanic administrators will come from. (One or two more university presidents wouldn't hurt.) To put it into perspective, I'll share a true story with you. One of my daughters came to the office, and looked at a picture of three people. She said, "Papa, who are those besides you?" I said, "Well, dear, those are three of the four Hispanic presidents of major universities in the United States." Since then, one of those people has resigned and one of the others has died. That focuses sharply the issue of strong leadership. I'm not really grinding any axes or anything, but the opportunity is here, the capacity is here, and we are losing a lot of it; let's preserve what we have and move ahead.

Now, these things don't just happen, these conferences don't just happen because a university president had a thought, rare as that might be. [Laughter.] One of the nice things about being a university president—and I love my job, I really do—is that we can facilitate things. We are just facilitators. Other people *do* things.

I told the Amarillo group this story; I'll share it with you, because it puts into perspective what Raul Besteiro and other school administrators do. I was down in Brownsville, right after the freeze two years ago. Gosh, it was cold in January! Unless you grew up in South Texas, you don't know how cold it can get. It was really bitterly cold, and Raul was showing me around (he has this huge jeep) with great enthusiasm for his schools. He was showing me one of his schools, and I looked at one of those little youngsters coming across the road, and it just broke my heart. He was wearing three shirts! I am sure that every one of you has seen kids with three shirts on because it was cold and they did not have coat—and practically no shoes at all. Yes, I felt for those people. I felt sorry for their physical discomfort, but I felt even more depressed and saddened. That is why I wanted to do something like this. I was saddened because I know the statistics, that half of them are never going to get through high school. Seven percent might get out of college, and two percent, perhaps, in a real extreme case, will finish graduate school or professional school.

So I was saddened and came back and talked to some people. Bea Zeeck, from our University News and Publications, and I thought

about this, and I really own Bea a lot of thanks for the direction she provided. The resource people who came from all over the state to help us out were great. Dick Ishler and his colleagues in the College of Education pulled together, I think, an exemplary program and an outstanding afternoon for all of us. Hermán García and Clyde Kelsey—it could not have happened without you folks; we really appreciate that. Mike Higgins, a citizen and a great person who has supported this, the Meadows Foundation, and another foundation all stepped forward to say that these are important issues for Americans to face today. Those are important for us all. Well, presidents always have the last word, not always right, but we always have the last word. So my last word to you is "thank you."

At least one-third of all adults now living in America are either illiterate or nearly so—they cannot function competently in our society.—Jonathan Kozol

Minority-group representation in our country's colleges and universities increased substantially between the mid-1960s and mid-1970s. But since the mid-1970s, few gains have been made.—Ford Foundation Commission on the Higher Education of Minorities

A shocking proportion of this generation of Hispanic young people is being wasted.—National Commission on Secondary Schooling for Hispanics

What needs to be realized is that there are more Hispanics in the United States than in about 12 Latin American countries. So we are not just a minority. The number of Hispanics in the United States makes us like a nation.—Antonio Tinajero

There is so much focus on materialism. Buying a television, buying a car. The values are all so turned around.—Angela Esperraguere

They say if we cannot speak English, there is no point in wanting to see the principal or counselors.—Hispanic parent

I was fortunate enough to have a teacher who really cared and emphasized getting that education that we need to survive in this world. And it has given me new hope.—Hispanic student

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Quotations are from *Newsweek* magazine, the *Chronicle of Higher Education*, the *Dallas Morning News*, and *Make Something Happen*, published by the Hispanic Policy Development Project.